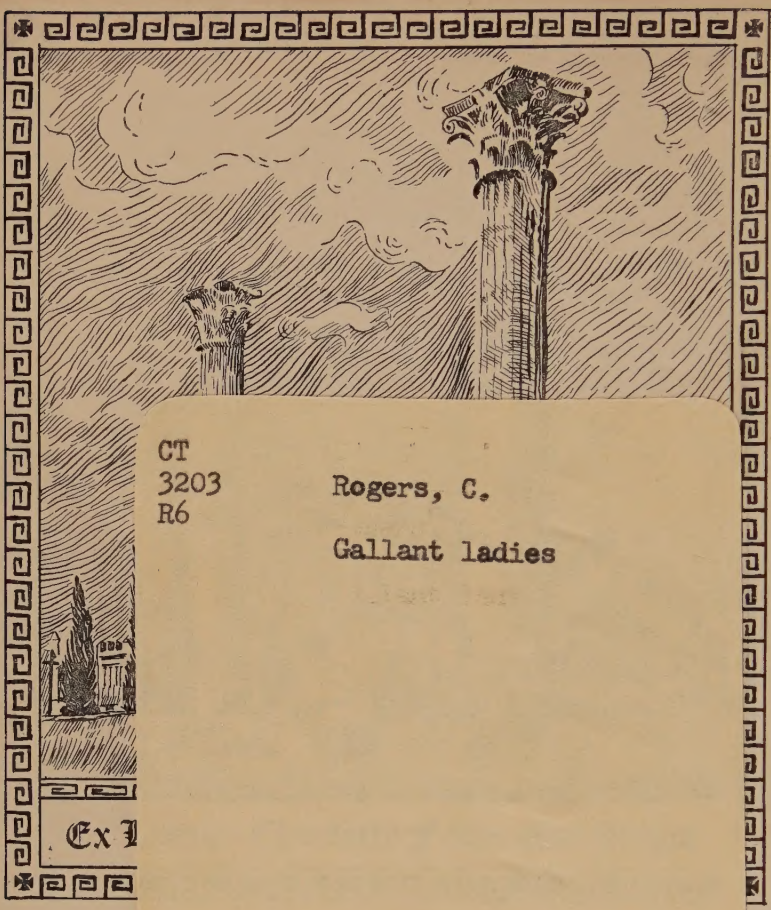

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GALLANT LADIES

ADRIENNE LECOUVREUR

GALLANT LADIES

by

CAMERON ROGERS

With illustrations by

CHARLES O. NAEF

28-4081

NEW YORK
HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY

1928

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Of the sketches included in this volume, the following have appeared in *Pictorial Review:* "Mary Read and Anne Bonny," "Her Frolic Grace of Kingston," "The Last Valois," "The Irresistible Montez," "Belle Starr."

CONTENTS

MATA HARI 15
MARY READ AND ANNE BONNY 53
THE IRRESISTIBLE MONTEZ 85
BELLE STARR 115
HER FROLIC GRACE OF KINGSTON 145
LA MAUPIN 175
THE LAST VALOIS 207
STUDY OF AN ACTRESS 257
THE QUEEN OF CABALS 297
CALAMITY JANE 345

FOREWORD

Gentleman adventurers and soldiers of fortune from Odysseus, the son of Laertes, to John Paul Jones and even more contemporaneous characters, have numbered their apologists in their hundreds. From biographies well ribbed with idealized concept to the plainer speaking of the Newgate Calendar, the lives of men who lived by no rule of thumb and died suddenly, many of them, in unquiet ways, have found able and eloquent deponents. Woman adventurers and feminine soldiers of fortune have, in their posthumous defenses, fared less well, possibly for the reason that even today the world's first impulse is to look askance at women who would take it by assault rather than by mining it with devious and charming tunnelings. Less recently it was considered, not without reason, that the world wrestled with and sometimes conquered by adventurous vagabonds, was a hard world, a brutal, catch-as-catch-can, kick-you-when-you're-down world, fit only for men and of them only the strongest and the most cunning. However logical it might be that in their sex was always to be found a pendent for the adventurous male, women were thought out of place in it, and if they persisted

in their strenuous occupation of it, they were, and not always metaphorically, stoned by honest folk. The very term "Gallant Ladies" connoted carnal misdemeanors and bawdy overtones deserving of condemnation and deletion, though such women as might so be named laid, in their fights with fortune and circumstance, no more stress upon the incidental of sex than did their masculine counterparts. In its adjectival use, touching these women, the word "gallant" denotes not sexual aberration, but courage, resource and character, and the possession of, or lack of, personal chastity takes in their lives, with few exceptions, a position no more consequential than it does in those of the Ithacan or of the great privateer.

Devoted partisans have elsewhere minutely considered several of the subjects of the following papers, notably, Madame de Chevreuse, Elizabeth, Duchess of Kingston, Lola Montez and that very lovely woman Adrienne Lecouvreur. Adequate and honest sources upon the others are far more rare and more especially in the case of Mata Hari, whose memory, famous or infamous as the reader wills, is still much veiled in contemporary legend. It may be questioned, perhaps, whether she, an avowed hetæra, should find a place among gallant women, but if she met life in a manner, to say the least, equivocal, she met death with all the gallantry that one could wish.

Many men have made less admirable exits when tied to a post before a dozen guns. Calamity Jane and Belle Starr, rough characters both, possessed nevertheless a courage that was never disputed and that resource which was the prime requirement of man or woman active in the turbulent arena that forty years ago composed the West. Both in their fashions were gallant, even as were Mary Read and Anne Bonny, fighting women who took all the chances and who begged no reprieve when pistol or hanger were useless and the decision cast finally against them. Mademoiselle Maupin, none might deny ingress to any Valhalla of warrior women. A great fencer, a great lover, she found time to be a distinguished musician, into the bargain, and every chapter of her short life was a saga. As to Jeanne de la Motte, the last Valois, a notable duelist whose weapon was her mind, it were vain to condemn her motives, so scrutable and so easily understood, however one may deplore the manner of their prosecution. Undeniably a rogue, nevertheless she was so formidable a rogue as to shake the throne of a kingdom and to cast discredit upon a régime omnipotent for centuries and on a dynasty still regnant, though not in France, today. Her moral sense was nonexistent, it is true, but her courage, her resource, and the dominant fiber of her character were unquestioned qualities.

The lives of these ten women have seemed worthy of record and remark, and for no one of those reasons why Magdalene has always found defenders. No one, perhaps, would leap with joy at the thought of any one of them being resident in his or her neighborhood today, but it is also doubtful whether today Odysseus would be asked to make a fourth at cards or John Paul Jones to spend the summer with the family. With the requisite perspective, however, both present outlines, if not details, that are strikingly noble and commanding, and their counterparts in the opposite sex, similarly endowed, also leave upon the mind an impression of "la grande peinture."

October, 1926.

MATA HARI

MATA HARI

IT WAS BY THIS NAME THAT SHE CHOSE TO BE KNOWN, Mata Hari, Eye of the Morning, and it was the eye of a very early and very beautiful morning that beheld the eventual agony of her apotheosis. In the pleasant dawning of October 15, 1917, as she waved the few inches of lace that served her for handkerchief, the bullets of Bouchardon's firing squad felled her in a red heap in the fosse of Vincennes, to furnish Ibáñez with a climax for "Mare Nostrum" and a number of journals with admirably dramatic copy. The first hetæra of Europe for more than a decade, one who had numbered among a regiment of lovers an ambassador, a minister of war, a president of the council of ministers, a prince imperial, a grand duke, and a great artist, she turned her talents in her last years to espionage and died as did Bolo Pasha,

ten meters in advance of a dozen rifles in a ditch well used to blood.

So long and so formidably had she dominated the minds of men that it seems impossible that she should have believed that her sentence would be carried out, but to Poincaré, endlessly contriving the massacre of the French Defeatists, her charms were a matter of hearsay grown a little stale and her beauty a thing rendered leprous by German caresses. There is much that is pathetic in the account of the proceedings that served to condemn her, an account rendered poignant by her tragic failure in the supreme crisis of her career to play Circe once again, a last time, to her advantage. Perhaps on her last morning she still hoped, as she commanded to be put upon her the latest creations of the Paris designers, and tied with stiff fingers the ribbons of her little slippers, but when her automobile reached Vincennes she understood. A final tragic touch of coquetry with none, after all, but death to smile at it.

Even during her lifetime there was much that was legendary sheathing her away from the public of two continents which sought to penetrate the glamor of her personality and career. She moved as in a penumbra of mystery, and her identity, the homely facts of birth and birthplace, she concealed sometimes even from her lovers. Her name, which was not Mata Hari but Mar-

guerite Gertrude Zelle, ill befitted her, and her birthplace, which was not the coasts of Malabar but Leeuwarden in mild and quiet Holland, became her no more than would sabots a royal peacock. In the days of her first successes in Paris, a little drunk perhaps on champagne well reënforced with brandy, and a great deal more so on the adulation of a half dozen men called great among their fellows, she would sketch a childhood more to her fancy and a family worthy to include her. Jaffuapatam in Malabar, the sacred sortilege of priapic festivals and the tutelage of Siva's adepts, composed the content of her girlhood, while her parents, caste Brahmins of position, dedicated her to the perpetual prostitution of the cultus of the lingam. After her death the newspapers of the world took her at her word and endowed her with Java as a birthplace, or Malabar, and proclaimed her Brahmin conception. In New York the *Sun,* the *Herald* and other journals confirmed the error, and even Sir Basil Thompson, who had in 1916 encountered her in his official capacity, believed her born of a Javanese mother. Admirably prepared for her career by a devoted study of the Ars Amandi of the East, she became, as the fat years passed, more and more Oriental in appearance, though all the while the lithe brown body she bared so willingly to all men was thewed and sinewed with tissues purely Frisian. The dances with which she

achieved her fame were all of them Eastern, though it was not upon the purple granite altar of a shrine to Siva that she was trained in their astonishingly licentious movements. To the end she preserved her identity of a genuine if super nautch girl, repudiating Holland, which, pathetically enough, once took much pride in her.

Marguerite Gertrude Zelle died betimes, unequipped to bewitch men into ruttish idiocies, but Mata Hari emerged from the drab chrysalis to dazzle and betray and finally to die with no less courage than did the noble and stainless Cavell. The Dutch girl, born at Leeuwarden on August 7th, 1878, of a "femme du pays" and an obscure and honest merchant, persevered in integrity perhaps until her twentieth year, but from that time until October 15, 1917, was lost in the labyrinthine convolutions of an extremely alien personality. Marguerite was married to one MacLeod, a captain in the Dutch Colonial forces, a Hollander of Scots descent, on the 30th of March, 1895, and almost immediately left Amsterdam for Java where MacLeod commanded a reserve battalion. Fresh from such a convent education as is available in Holland to girls of the lower middle class, life and customs in the Colonies first shocked and then debauched her. In a land where a man could drink two quarts of whiskey a day and yet survive in comparative

sobriety, MacLeod was drunk almost continually when off duty, and when his attention during such seasons was attracted by his wife, the fact seems not to have pleased him. Even before her daughter, Marie Louise, was born, Marguerite seems to have encountered misfortunes at his hands and when, later, she bore a boy who shortly died of a poison administered by a native servant in revenge for some affront, MacLeod considered her useless for all purposes and resorted to a riding crop. Writing to her father from Benjoe Biroe near Demarang she lamented that the captain took pleasure in beating her at all hours, occasionally varying his diversion by dragging her about by her hair. In a letter dated August 3rd 1901 she observes that he was wont latterly to threaten her with his revolver so that when, in the fall of that year, the MacLeods were again in Amsterdam, all those concerned in and with the ménage were absolute for divorce. MacLeod himself, it is quite possible, was aware of the genesis of Mata Hari, for Marguerite's six years in Java had been spent, when not convalescing from the effects of his peevishness, in carefully studying the dancing girls of that island. In point of fact, Marguerite passes from the picture with the death of her little boy and Mata Hari supersedes her to bear her husband's brutalities with contempt and to plan her escape at the first opportunity. MacLeod, who had married a comely and docile

Frisian girl named Marguerite Gertrude Zelle, was in 1901 enraged by the induction into his household of a silent, flame-eyed woman with whom, he passionately complained, it were as easy to eat and sleep as with a panther. The divorce, however, seems not at once to have been procured and the domicile rocked and detonated in the Van Breestraat, number 188, Amsterdam, until August 26, 1902. On that day MacLeod terminated a ten-day spree by beating his enigmatic lady into a stupor and left the house, taking with him his six-year-old daughter. He did not return. Mata Hari, penniless, sought refuge with an aunt, one, according to E. Gomez Carillo, the dancer's ablest apologist, Baroness Sweerts de Landes, wife of the banker Goedvriend of Arnhem. From Arnhem she sought redress and succeeded in securing on August 30, 1902, a judgment committing her daughter to her custody, authorizing her residence with her kinswoman, and demanding that her husband pay her 100 florins a month for her support while otherwise absenting himself entirely and indefinitely from her side.

MacLeod received the intelligence of all this with drunken but hearty laughter. Knowing his public, he replied by publishing in the journals a masterly bit of sentiment setting forth that his wife had broken his heart by quitting his bed and board and that, much against his will, he was forced therefor to renounce both debts

incurred by her and, even, alas, all support of her. The stout folk of Amsterdam were thereupon with him to a gossip. They execrated the Lais who had thus brought shame upon the Van Breestraat, and while MacLeod supplied his gaping bed and board with a more comfortable mate, his wife's aunt, the ridiculous baroness, turned her niece into the streets. This was on the 10th of December 1902, the weather foul, and the times, for a penniless girl, exceeding hard. Mata Hari, pardonably distraught, beat her way to The Hague and collapsed on the paternal doorstep, a prodigal who, at twenty-seven, had so far been prodigal with nothing save tears.

Zelle senior seems to have been not only a worthy but a broadminded parent. He regretted MacLeod, who had been a cut or two above him socially, and he lamented the treachery of Baroness Sweerts, and no doubt in his staunch plebeian consciousness he recognized the fallacy of gentility. He nursed his daughter back to health single-handed, for since 1890 he had been a widower, and set himself to devise the reconstruction of her life. Herein Mata Hari was indispensable. She ceased not to urge him that she could and would dance for a living and that, would he pay her way to Paris, he would soon have proofs of her ability. Zelle, wealthier than he had been as a small shopman in Leeuwarden, pondered this well, and after much heavy thought, engaged to send

her into France. He did so and she was seeking engagements in Paris, when the preposterous MacLeod erupted once again from the Van Breestraat, and by telegram threatened to bury her in a convent if she did not forthwith cease to drag an old and honorable name in the gutter, and straightway return to Holland. Zelle weakened and his daughter, inexperienced and fearful, crept cowering home. Cloistered with relatives in Nimègue she was in 1904 like to die of sheer boredom. In January of that year she wrote gloomily to this effect:

"Behold me, then, condemned to remain here . . . here where there exists only the shadow of a gray and humid hearth in which only the copper pots have the right to shine in the pale sunlight. Where there exists the silent, the grave, the hostile street, in which an alien footstep calls the anxious duennas to windows shrouded in lace curtains. Here, where a little tulip garden shudders in the winter winds. Here where the fog, the soft fog, veils everything and blankets to a silvery chime the strokes of the municipal carillon. Here there is the incessant overseeing of beldames and matrons who have vaguely heard reports of a flight to Paris and dances in theaters. Here, in fact, is shame and nostalgia. . . ."

Here she stayed, however, until the Spring of 1905, persistently terrorized by her bladder of a husband, who, at intervals, issued proclamations from tavern or

brothel to the effect that she was dulling the luster of his name and reputation. Finally this procession of diverting threats and complaints lost their effect for her. Like the fabled monk of Siberia who burst from his cell in the manner described in the limerick, she burst from hers after almost two years of duress and gained Paris. MacLeod, even Zelle her father, was forgotten. She made her début at the Musée Guimet in a series of Oriental dances in that same year, and 1905 beheld the risen splendor of the Eye of the Morning.

Although the facts of her life until 1906 were at one time published in Holland in the form of an autobiography, edited by her father, a pamphlet now extremely rare, curiously entitled: "Mata Hari, Madame G. M. MacLeod Zelle. The story of the life of my daughter, and my complaints against her ex-husband, with portraits, documents, facsimiles and supplements, by A. Zelle, czn,—C. L. G. Veldt, Amsterdam," she achieved success to deny them, as has been observed, in favor of a more romantic past. The Musée Guimet rendered her actual reminiscences unfitted to be those of a sacred courtesan of Siva. Public men of influence and reputation who shared her favors with the priests of that deity expected more than a sordid drama of domestic sadism as a background for amorous virtuosity, and Mata Hari never again referred to the work of A. Zelle. In the first

weeks of 1906 MacLeod sobered sufficiently to vindicate his respectability by divorcing her and from that year to 1917, no one, least of all herself, mentioned in connection with her Holland or marriage.

An American author resident in Paris witnessed her performance as a nautch girl at a soirée given in 1905 by the minister of Chile and noted among other things that in her, as she executed an Oriental pantomime, there lived a flame of passion that made one delirious, that seduced and terrified. . . . At the Musée Guimet she inspired critiques, all of them clamant with superlatives and all testaments of how thoroughly she had furnished herself with a genesis far from Dutch. Her days became a succession of triumphs, this evening a performance for the Princess Murat, that, one for the Prince del Drago, performances attended by a society which belled her beauty abroad like beagles and bade higher and higher for her favors. A year after her première she was installed in the Palace Hotel on the Avenue of the Champs-Elysées, and the sacred courtesan of Siva was become the secular one of the great of the continent of Europe.

The metamorphosis from Marguerite Gertrude Zelle to Mata Hari, the Eye of the Morning, was by now complete. The reserved and modest Frisian, notes Carillo, now came never in the company of men without emerg-

ing completely from her garments, and her professional engagements were filled in a like fashion, garbed solely in a zone about her breasts. Many contemporary Frenchmen have written at length and minutely touching the beauty of her body and the aphrodisiac incense of her charm, and as many, at the time of her arrest, very gallantly owned that they had loved her, testifying to no ordinary and transient impression but to one which, once received, remained apparently in the mind until death. No one of them seems to have believed that their common mistress was pathologically abnormal or that exhibitionism or nymphomania controlled the singular precepts of her life. As a nautch girl, a woman trained in a prostitution at once methodical and honorable, she possessed a dignity in their eyes which, as a mere degenerate Dutchwoman, she could never have possessed. Her portrayal of her chosen part, for this very reason, transcends the art of impersonation. She came, actually, to be a Javanese, and her talk of temples and rituals and priapic ordinations, smutty patter on affected tongues, partook on hers of a sincerity wholly seasonable and convincing. After 1906 her life was transformed into a sort of perpetual abandonment to pleasure, but she experienced occasional revulsions and more than occasional impulses to create for herself a more worthy name as an artiste, a career not less than those of Isadora Duncan

or of Loie Fuller. "I am entirely disposed to dance again and to renounce my easy life to savor once more the preoccupations which of necessity lead to fame, but I wish at least to have the benefit of what I do and not to be robbed by others." To a composer she writes thus: "The idea of a Hindu temple with the goddess pleases me; it was in such scenery that I first danced at the Musée Guimet, where my portraits are still to be found. Others have imitated all that. It is the only way to adequately frame sacred dances. The temple can be as unreal as one wishes, for I also shall be." There are other notes, suggestions to other composers, such as this one: "Paul should express by his music the three following ideas, incarnation, apparition, flowering. These three evolutions correspond to the powers of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, to wit: creation, fecundation, destruction. In this case, destruction is the creator; that is why Siva, if he does not surpass, at least equals Brahma. By destruction, in incarnation, towards creation: that is what the dance should signify." One might remark that if Paul understood that he was a bright and able boy, but beneath this euphonious quackery lay a genuine enthusiasm and a knowledge, if vague, of what she attempted to express.

Mentally far from undeveloped, her intelligence, untrained but vigorous, busied itself unceasingly with the evolution of an individual philosophy, though perhaps

she felt it incumbent upon her to subscribe to the immemorial fatalism of the East. To a friend she could write: "You will die as all people die; but until death, one must live to the full beautiful and glorious moments; better to lead on earth a brief and intense existence than to drag oneself through a senescence barren of beauty." True enough, no doubt. Certainly her preference was granted her by the gods. There were times when her lovers inspired only disgust in her and when her years of study of those Asiatic manuals of love, shameful to the Occidental mind, seemed after all but wasted and unproductive of felicity. "Just now, I am Queen . . . I have my court and my courtiers. . . . G—— with his hyena's muzzle and his card-cheat's expression would not miss his daily call even were I in hell. And C—— the millionaire, who would betray God for me! . . . And Lord Cla—— as puritan upon the surface as he is at bottom libertine! . . . Ah, their jewels and their flowers repel me! . . . There is something accursed in beauty. Men are horrible. These, who adore me, would devour each other for one of my smiles. The Grand-duke B——, who transforms himself into a Nero when he is drunk, how revolting! And the Count von G——, intimate of the Kaiser's, general of the Guard, to judge him one needs simply to see him eat! Ah! The monsters! Their flatteries nauseate me; their caresses

freeze me. . . ." Strong words, these, but it is worthy of note that to the above mentioned gentlemen Mata Hari was never anything but kind, and her estimates of their characters, if thus expressed, never reached their ears. But there is no doubt that in the end the monotony of her successes came to bore her, to impregnate her with that terrible tædium vitæ from which any turpitude and any madness, however unspeakable, comes as a release. The exact date of the commencement of her traffickings with the German secret service authorities is unknown, but as valid an explanation of them as any is that in espionage she sought to find an egress from the maze of tasteless triumphs that encompassed her. The suggestion that she was bought seems not a little ridiculous since, though she received from Berlin 75,000 marks during the first two years of the war, enormous sums to be given in payment to a spy, they were but a meager thirty pieces of silver to one at whose service there waited in Paris a half dozen inexhaustible bank accounts. Her villa at Neuilly was a testament of her credit in France before ever the Germans enlisted her services, and during the war there is no evidence that she ever lacked admirers. Her apologist urges that her preference for the Germans, who treated her like a goddess, as against the French who admired her but preferred to behold in her only an accomplished and extremely desirable bed-fel-

low, may have determined her treason, and in consideration of a formidable vanity, this may well be so. Certainly it is a more credible construction than that placed upon her actions by the commandant Massard, author of "The Women Spies of Paris" and an authority instrumental in her condemnation, who prefers the charge of venality. "The accused was of an extreme cupidity. . . ." This may have been so, but why endanger her life to secure what she might have secured threefold and without jeopardy, for the asking?

She was arrested in Paris in July 1917 at tea time in the grill room of one of the largest hotels. In December 1916 she had been in Madrid, ostensibly filling a professional engagement, actually in constant communication with the German secret service stationed in that city. Terminating her business, she reached Falmouth in January 1917 and was at once taken in charge by Scotland Yard, whose chief, Sir Basil Thompson, personally examined her. "The ship put into Falmouth and she was brought ashore, together with her very large professional wardrobe, and escorted to London. I expected to see a lady who would bring the whole battery of her charms to bear upon the officers who were to question her. There walked into the room a severely practical person who was prepared to answer any question with a kind of reserved courtesy, who felt so sure of herself

and of her innocence that all that remained in her was a desire to help her interrogators. The only thing graceful about her was her walk and the carriage of her head. She made no gestures and, to say truth, time had a little dimmed the charms of which we had heard so much, for at this time the lady must have been at least forty." Parenthetically, one must here observe upon the blunt candor of the Briton as compared with the dictum of Louis Dumur, who saw what may have been her last public appearance as a danseuse. The occasion was a ball given in her palace by the Princess of Eckmühl, a month or two previous to the spy's arrest, at which Mata Hari danced, as usual, quite naked. Dumur, in his book, "The Defeatists," describes her appearance in detail, and nowhere in his catalogue of her charms does one perceive a waning of her beauty. But then, Sir Basil of course beheld her clothed.

Before she left England Thompson recorded the following dialogue:

Sir Basil Thompson: "Madame, we are going to send you back to Spain, and if you will take the advice of one nearly twice your age [gallantly said, this], give up what you have been doing."

Mata Hari: "Sir, I thank you from my heart. I shall not forget your advice. What I have been doing I will do no more. You may trust me implicitly." And so,

exit. Five months later she was in the prison of Saint-Lazare.

According to the press reports that heralded her death, the immediate occasion of her apprehension was her careful observation in England of the construction of the British tanks and her subsequent remarks thereupon to Berlin. It was noted, further, that at the time of her arrest, she had in tow a young British tank officer who seemed sufficiently dazzled to have bared to her every military secret in the world, but the cause of her imprisonment, trial and execution was the fact that since the beginning of the war she had cost the French at least one division of soldiers. Since 1914 her activities had been indefatigably directed towards the seduction of French officers whom she sucked dry of information and sent back to the front, to return, if they escaped death, to furnish her anew with mental pabulum for the authorities in Berlin. When she was searched after her arrest she was found to be carrying documents of a character gravely incriminating, but they were not news to the French government. She had been for a long while suspected, and the hazard that placed definite proof in its hands served as no more than a last and clinching evidence of her guilt.

Her trial before a council of war presided over by Colonel Semprou and inspired by the remorseless Mas-

sard, took place within a week of her arrest. It was known that her relations with such Germans as the Crown Prince himself, the Duke of Brunswick and the prefect of police in Berlin had been confidential and close, and no one, not even her one-time lovers, men who had never ceased to love her, believed her guiltless. The tribunal, individually gallantly disposed and emotionally warm-hearted, proved collectively a cold and quite remorseless instrument of justice. Its president, in possession of the woman's private papers, love letters from innumerable infantry officers and aviators and politicals of far more influence than these, conducted a cross examination with these documents as a basis of accusation that could not fail to be completely damning. Only once did he waver from his frigid and impassive excavations into the secrets of her bedroom. Rising to read aloud a letter most intimately phrased from no less a one than a minister of war, Mata Hari interrupted the proceedings of the court.

"Do not read that letter, Colonel."

"I am forced to read it."

"Then do not make the signature known."

"And why?"

"Because . . . because the signer is married and I do not wish to be the cause of a domestic drama in an honest family. Do not, I beg you, read the name."

Semprou, for a minute, was genuinely moved. But not Massard. That cynic soldier allowed himself only the briefest etching of a smile. The court continued its inquisition.

"On the day of the declaration of war you lunched with the prefect of police of Berlin and then went with him in his carriage through the yelling crowds?"

"That is so. I had met the prefect of police in a music hall where I was dancing. In Germany the police have the right to censor the costumes of the artistes. The newspapers had said that I was appearing almost completely naked and the prefect came in person to examine my toilette. That is how we became acquainted."

"Very good. A little while afterwards the head of the German Secret Service intrusted you with a confidential mission and remitted to you 30,000 marks."

"That is so in so far as the person and the sum go. This important functionary did indeed give me 30,000 marks but not as payment for such services as you indicate, but as payment for my favors. The head of the German Secret Service was my lover."

"That we knew, but that sum for a gift of gallantry seems to us a little exorbitant."

"To me, no! . . . Never has any one given me less. . . ."

"All the better then! From Berlin you came to Paris

by way of Belgium, Holland and England. What did you come to do in Paris?"

"I came chiefly to oversee the dismantling of my villa at Neuilly."

"Immediately afterwards, on the pretext of serving in an ambulance, you spent seven months in the war zone?"

"At Vittel where I was not a nurse, I wished to devote myself to caring for a Russian soldier, Captain Marov, blinded by the war. My wish was to redeem my sinful life at the bedside of an unfortunate whom I loved."

Massard checked another hard smile. Her selfless and enduring passion for the Russian was well known and it was said that far from receiving money from him, she provided him with his. It was to Marov that, later, her last letter was to be written.

Semprou, after a brief pause, continued:

"The fact is, that, since your arrival in Paris, you have been seen in no company but that of soldiers. Aviators, especially, seem to have inspired in you an extraordinary affection. They, too, sought you out, flattered you, paid court to you. How did you succeed in drawing from them without their knowledge the secrets of which they alone were the repositories? Mystery of the alcove . . . But it is obvious that you communicated to the enemy the points where our aeroplanes set down the agents employed in overlooking our advances. It is

thus that you caused the death of many of our soldiers."

"I do not deny that being with the ambulance I continued to correspond with the head of the German Secret Service who was in Holland. It is not my fault if he was in such an employ. But I never spoke to him about the war, I furnished him with no information. . . ."

So far she had fought well behind an impenetrable defense uniquely constituted by the avowal of her vocation as a courtesan, but Semprou had yet to deliver his shrewdest blow. Mornay, commissaire of the government, and Massard, were growing a trifle impatient. Semprou played with his signet. He cleared his throat.

"In Paris, in a certain circumstance, feeling yourself watched, feeling yourself lost, the idea occurred to you to offer your services to the head of the French Secret Service?"

His voice was softer than before but Mornay smiled and Massard leaned forward.

Mata Hari had grown suddenly as pale as wood ashes. She started to speak, stammered and made tremulous play with her handkerchief at her lips.

"Is this true?" Semprou prompted with an insistence so gentle as to startle Mornay.

"Yes, it is true, but . . . but you must remember that at that time I was without money. It is that reason

alone which prompted me to offer my services to your country."

"In what fashion did you expect to be of use to France?"

"In allowing her to profit by my relations. Thus, at the start, I indicated to the chief of the Second Bureau the exact points on the coast of Morocco where the German submarines disembarked their arms, which seemed to me to be important."

The give-away was so utterly, so blastingly complete that it needed not Mornay's harsh "You could not have known those points had you not been in communication with Germany" to inform her that her game was played.

"After all—I—I am not French. I owe no obligation to . . . to this country. My services were useful; that is all I have to say. . . . I am only a poor woman hounded by ungallant officers who wish me to confess sins which I have never committed. . . . I am a courtesan, yes, but a spy, never!" She seemed to crouch a little. Mornay's face was a mask. "That man is a knave." Her scream startled the commissaire terribly. Semprou's voice flowed on like a glacial stream.

"Calm yourself and permit me to continue to speak to you touching that time when of your own accord you offered your services to the French Secret Service. When

Captain Ledoux asked you what you could do you offered, as a Dutchwoman, to go into Belgium with instructions for the agents that we have there. The Captain gave you sealed orders for one of these agents and you sailed supposedly to England. From there you were to go to Holland and thence, as soon as could be, to Belgium. And you went neither to Belgium nor to Holland, but to Spain, where we will shortly find you. This did not prevent you from profiting by the sealed orders committed to your care. Do you remember how?"

Mata Hari's monosyllabic negative was inexpressibly dreary.

"Ah! three weeks after your departure from Paris, this agent whose name you divulged was shot in Brussels by the Germans."

The tribunal seemed to sigh as with one breath. The woman remained with her eyes upon the toes of her tiny fashionable pumps.

"In Madrid, at the Ritz Hotel, you occupied a room adjoining that of the head of the German Secret Service in Spain."

"That is so."

"This agent of Berlin made you frequent visits."

"That, too, is so."

"Did you receive gifts from this man?"

"But yes . . . he was my lover."

"Very good. This lover telegraphed to his colleague at Amsterdam when you had returned to Paris, ordering him to pay you through the intermediary of a neutral legation the sum of 15,000 marks."

"Why deny it? The said German functionary preferred to pay for my favors with his government's money."

"This council of war will take that explanation for what it is worth. You admit that the money came from the head of the German Secret Service in Amsterdam?"

"Perfectly. . . . From my friend in Holland who paid without knowing it the debts of my friend in Spain." Even to her her words were pitifully without conviction or reasonable intelligence. While Mornay looked away and Massard studied the ceiling she fell to trembling and to stammering.

"I . . . I . . . tell you that . . . that . . . it was to pay for my nights of love. It . . . it . . . is my price. . . . Believe me . . . be gallant . . . gentlemen . . . officers of the French. . . ."

The grisly business went on; witnesses, Frenchmen of influence and note, sought vainly to exculpate her; she had moments of hope when she sought pathetically to enchant her judges, even Mornay, with a charm chilled by terror, and all of course was useless. Not a man in the court but would have ordinarily defended her and

not a man who heard her who did not believe her guilty as hell. The judges deliberated ten minutes only, to arrive at their verdict. Semprou questioned each one, calm as he had remained throughout the entire trial. As they answered in turn the woman scrutinized them with eyes grown childishly incredulous and sad.

"In your soul and conscience, do you believe this woman guilty of communicating information and documents to the enemy and thus of having caused the deaths of many of our soldiers?"

With no exception, each replied in the affirmative. One ejaculated, his composure suddenly destroyed, "It is horrible to condemn to death in the full plenitude of her youth one who is so seductive and so intelligent, but her intrigues have caused such disasters that, if I could, I would have her shot not once but twice."

Semprou at the final moment turned quite white. As her guards presented arms the clerk of the court read the accused her sentence. Two tears rolled slowly down her cheeks. She murmured once or twice, "It is not possible." As she was taken away, once again perfectly composed, a grizzled gendarme swore a sinewed oath. "There's one who will know how to die."

One Bralez, assistant to Doctor Bizard, the medical authority at the prison of St. Lazare, has elsewhere described very fully the conduct of the condemned dur-

ing the two months and more that expired before her sentence was carried out. There is but little doubt that she daily expected a commutation of sentence, since nothing in her career had fitted her for the realization that men are not always ruled by their physical passions and that these she could not always appeal to and control. A multitude of legends expose her lamentations, confessions, endless and devastating appeals for life, life only, imprisonment far from wind and sunlight if they would, but life, but while these are convincing enough they remain without factual basis or foundation. Only once did she betray the slightest indication that she confidently expected a change of punishment. M. Clunet, her lawyer, having, in October, made a last attempt to convince Poincaré of her innocence, was absent twenty-four hours from attendance upon her, and this seems to have confirmed in her mind the belief that she was not to die. Awaiting him, she threw off her clothes and danced again, a last time, naked, between the narrow somber walls of her cell while the nun detailed to keep her company shuddered, her face averted, at this exhibition of beautiful and loathsome abandonment to the Satan of carnal sins. Clunet returned from his audience with the great little fanatic who presided over the Republic of France to blast this final renascence of an interest in living. Poincaré was not to be

budged. Bralez, outside her cell, hurried in at the sound of prolonged and horrid laughter. Clunet held his head in his hands while the attendant religieuse stopped both her ears and seemed about to swoon. Mata Hari, her hands to her sides, laughed and laughed.

"Do you know what he advises me to do, this good Clunet? Simply to benefit by the dispositions of article 27 of I don't know what law and declare that I am pregnant. . . . It is side-splitting. . . ."

Clunet, it is said, fearful of the effect upon her of the weeks of suspense during September, insisted to her that the guns of the firing squad would contain only blank cartridges and her continued composure impelled fellow prisoners to say, "We will see if before the guns she will act as arrogantly as she does before us."

A little after five o'clock on the morning of October 15th, 1917, Bouchardon, the captain in command of the proceedings, announced in the prison anteroom that the time had come to carry out the sentence of the tribunal. Clunet, haggard and old, seized him by the arm. "Captain, Captain, excuse me. I do not feel courageous enough to go up; but tell her that I am here, close by, and assure her that I have not abandoned her at the end." Bouchardon's voice was harsh. "I am not here to execute your commissions. Say what you have to say in person to this woman." Poor little Clunet stumbled up-

stairs as in a daze. On the first floor of the prison, known as the "Pont d'Avignon," since all prisoners passed through it to their cells, the silent party followed a long corridor until it reached number 12. The nun, Sister Léonide, opened the door. Within the cell three women slept. Bouchardon peered. "Which one?" "In the middle." Mata Hari, drugged the day before with chloral, awakened hard though the officer might have been more gentle as he shook her. She sat up, supporting herself on hands that clenched the sheets like claws.

"Zelle, have courage. The President of the Republic has refused you reprieve. The hour of expiation is at hand."

In the silence that followed, she was heard ten times to mutter, "It is not possible," while all but the two doctors, Bizard and Bralez, retired that she might clothe herself. She dressed swiftly, stopping to say to one of the nuns who would have covered her nakedness from the two men, "Oh, don't bother, Sister, now is not the time to be prudish." Bralez gave her a liqueur glass filled with brandy which she drank, while Bizard procured smelling salts. Outside the cell Bouchardon cleared his throat, within it Sister Léonide commenced to weep, silently, violently. Mata Hari paused in her quick sure movements. "Do not fear, Sister, I will know how to die without weakening. You will see a beautiful death." Her

face hardened curiously. "Oh, the French! . . . What good will it do them to have me killed? If it would win the war for them . . . Ah, they will see. It was certainly in vain that I did so much for them. And after all I am not French. Sister, give me my warmest dress, for it is cold this morning; and my pretty little pumps too; I always like to be well shod. . . . I wish to speak to my chaplain."

M. Darboux gave her absolution. Beyond the door Bouchardon stamped with his feet. "I am ready." She turned to Bizard and Bralez. "Thank you a last time for your cares and solicitude." Sister Léonide continuing to weep, Mata Hari shook her a little. "I have traveled much, Sister. Well, this time I set off for the great station, but I shall not return. Come, now, act as I do, little mother, do not weep!" Socquet, legal medical expert, asked her for form's sake if she was with child. "Oh, certainly not. What would you have . . ." The door was opened, the company moved forward, out of the prison. A bailiff made as if to lay hands upon her and she turned on him like a tigress. "Loose me, you, do not touch me, I do not wish it; I am not a thief . . . what manners. . . ." And as the man retreated, abashed, scarlet, she looked at the crowd gathered in the street, "What a lot of people. A good house. What a success." She asked to write two letters, and it was permitted her.

She ungloved her right hand and wrote briefly to her daughter, to Marov, her Russian lover. Sealing them, she smiled. "Above all do not confuse the addresses. . . ." Her step was firm as she got into the motor car that was to carry her to Vincennes, much firmer than that of Sister Léonide or the Reverend Darboux. The little cortège started as Bralez heard her say, "I leave for the station from which one does not return. Ah, these French. . . ."

At Vincennes the firing squad stood on their arms. Three ranks of soldiers were stiff at attention. It was scarce dawn, a very beautiful, quiet, early morning. As the car that carried her ground to a stop, a bugle sounded. She dismounted, walked forward, the nun with her praying audibly. Close to the post, Mata Hari disengaged herself swiftly from the girl. "Kiss me quickly, and now, leave me; stand on the right, I will look towards you. Adieu!"

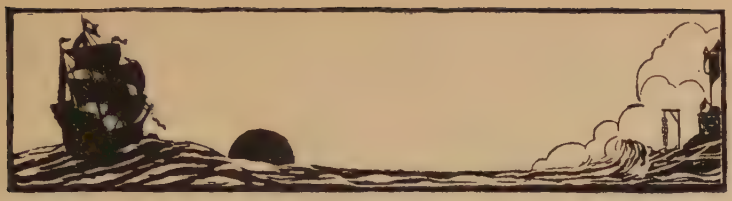
Two soldiers fastened about her the bands that held her to the post but, vigorously, she refused the handkerchief that was to bind her eyes. The firing squad, four soldiers, four corporals, four sous-officiers, came to attention, shouldered arms, marched to within ten paces of her. She smiled, waved her handkerchief and as she did so, the commanding officer lifted his sword. . . .

As the flat dry report died away she collapsed; her

head fell forward upon the ground. Eleven of the twelve bullets had found their mark. There was no need for the coup de grâce.

Bralez notes that as the squad defiled before the body, a soldier of the escort fell forward on his face, unconscious. But Bouchardon was smiling. To his mind and to the minds of all loyal Frenchmen, not excluding those illustrious patriots who had loved her and who had testified in her defense, the Eye of the Morning had found her just deserts, and since she had had to die it was well that she had known how to. No other performance, certainly, in her life had been one half so fine.

MARY READ AND ANNE BONNY



MARY READ AND ANNE BONNY

On the fifth day of September, 1717, his Gracious Majesty King George I of England and Ireland, set his hand upon a Proclamation of Pardon to all pirates, free-booters, gentlemen adventurers, and sea rovers who would, on or before the fifth of September, 1718, surrender themselves to "one of our Principal Secretaries of State in Great Britain or Ireland, or to any Governor or Deputy Governor of any of our Plantations beyond the Seas." This paper, admirably executed in the King's English—though to be strict here, in the King's Counselors' English, for the King had no English, being lately come from Hanover and so approved the proclamation in a passable German translation—went westward upon the person of Captain Woodes Rogers, appointed Governor of the Island of Providence with authority to deal faithfully by such notable villains as Captain Teach, better known as Blackbeard, Stede Bonnet, and Captain Vane, his quartermaster Rackam and others of their disreputable ilk. Sent ahead to Providence to apprize the gentlemen ad-

venturers there assembled, what was afoot, this notice caused consternation and much profanity. Blackbeard, characteristically enough, was for fighting Governor Rogers and serving illimitable rum immediately to all hands. Others were for retiring in good order with their loot to neighboring plantations and as the pirates' council sat, these fought with cutlasses to decide who would sail to which plantation. One Captain Jennings, however, the most influential among them, stood fast for accepting the royal George's pardon and in the end all save Vane and Rackam followed him to the fold. Vane and his quartermaster, as Rogers' men-of-war entered one channel of the Island's harbor, hoisted sail and ran out the other firing upon the King's ships as they went. A few turbulent months later Vane and Rackam parted, each to command his own rascal crew and from the twenty-fourth day of November, 1718, until the dawn that found him miserably suspended in chains from Port Royal gallows, Rackam sailed the main on his own nefarious business assisted therein by the strangest pair of pirates that ever trod a blood-soaked and slippery deck.

One was Mary Read, the other was Anne Bonny, a name which in an adjectival use would have described both to the life for both were comely girls, exceedingly well favored in face and form. Why they sailed with

such a gory blackguard as Rackam, composed a problem, which at eventual assizes was decided against them, though it should be pleaded that as the King's Proclamation of Pardon was extended to gentlemen adventurers only, they, being lady adventurers, were thereby automatically debarred from enjoying it. At any rate they never did enjoy it nor did they even attempt to, a fact which seems to have convinced their judges that, though handsome and high mettled, they were confirmed in wickedness and lust. But before they came to their accounting, both of them had led merry and exciting lives and, as one might say, painted the ocean red.

Mary Read, the more womanly of the two, had lived stirring days before ever she shipped beneath the skull and cross-bones or allowed her shapely person to fall into the hands of the King's men. Mary was a true lady adventurer and the circumstances of her birth and childhood all worked together to guarantee the pursuit of a predilection that must have been hers since earliest infancy. Her mother, a pretty Devon girl, was married young to Reed, an Englishman, probably of Plymouth, who, in the parlance of the day "used the sea" and who sailed away one day leaving behind him, cared for by his relatives, his Devon maid soon to be a mother. In due time she became one but her husband never sailed back again. What became of him Mary's mother never

knew. There were so many hazards to be met with on the high seas during the last decade of the seventeenth century—sea serpents, maelstroms that engulfed vessels in smooth and spinning whorls of water, alien shipping unplacated as yet by the Peace of Utrecht, and of course, pirates. Mary's mother, having borne her departed spouse a son, waited for a short while, yearned for a shorter, and then dismissed absent Jack from her mind, not, however, allowing her relatives-in-law to suspect that her heart was not broken or her happiness destroyed. Alas, Mary's mother was, as a delightful chronicler of her daughter has put it, "young and airy" and it was not long before she was in a way to present her son with a sister or a brother as the case might be, and to put herself to everlasting shame in the eyes of her husband's family and the good townsfolk of Plymouth. Consequently she planned a little jaunt into the country and informed her neighbors and the Reads that friends in inland Devon had bidden her on a visit and that she had decided to accept their invitation for a length of time perhaps not indefinite but certainly considerable. Tearfully her husband's kin bade her farewell and kissed her baby son. Stout folk of affectionate and clannish natures, the Reads lamented her departure and urged against it, but the girl was strangely resolute. Off she went, Dartmoor way, and settled herself quietly in a re-

mote village to await her lying-in. For a time her days ran smooth enough but anon misfortune in the guise of a pestilence swept into Devon with London postboys and carried away her little son. She was overcome with sorrow and remorse at once, not being a bad girl at heart, but her bereavement came to a sudden end when she gave birth to a little girl who took his place. This little girl was the Mary of our chronicle, and her destiny peeped leering in at her while she still lay cradled.

Four years in a tiny Devon hamlet exhausted not only Mrs. Read's patience but finally her money. Though four years older she was no wiser and she was still "young and airy" and desirous of airing both qualifications in surroundings more capable of appreciation than a Dartmoor village. There all the men were either married or plighted and had no eyes for widows however engaging. Therefore she set about one day to change the sex of her remaining child with a view to returning to Plymouth and the bounty of the Reads. She would substitute Mary for her dead brother, run the risk of discovery by the keen old eyes of her mother-in-law, and henceforth live wisely if not morally in the bustling, seaman-crowded town of her birth. Mary, aged four, made no demur, had her head shorn and her little dress exchanged for breeches, and fared southward

with her frolic dam, coached like a little parrot upon her actions and her prattle.

Mrs. Read senior welcomed the couple with protestations of gratitude and joy. Aging, her eyes discovered no fault in her grandson and indeed she begged that she might have the raising of him, but her daughter-in-law at the suggestion grew pale and even shuddered a little. She insisted with loud lamentation that separation from her child, her baby, the son of her beloved husband, would crack her heart and cause her to fade utterly away. Mrs. Read senior was pleasantly disappointed to find her so loving. Patting her daughter-in-law's cheek she offered to give her a crown a week for the infant's maintenance and all the assistance necessary in bringing it up to be a credit to Plymouth and to England. Her desire accomplished, Mary's mother grew blithe and airy as never before but she seasoned her gayety with caution, for when Mary was thirteen her mother took her into her confidence and pointed out that unless she continued to be bred up as a boy all money from headquarters would without doubt instantly cease and other things no whit less cheerless ensue. Mary very sensibly decided to remain in breeches. Indeed, as she had hardly ever been out of them and had always believed herself a boy, she considered a transformation of sex with disgust and longed for the day when she might

swagger along the water front with other brown and hardened blades, a Jack tar of the tarriest. Thus all was well, or would have been, had not Grandmother Read died suddenly of an apoplexy leaving no provision for the continuation of her daughter-in-law's weekly crown. Mary's mother was stricken with dismay, and Mary with excitement, for the time had come for her to go out into the great wide world and force it to pay her not crowns but pounds and golden guineas.

And she went, but at first no farther than the next street from that in which she lived. In the next street resided an elegant lady, French by all accounts, desirous of a footboy, so Mrs. Read was informed, and for the services of one she would pay a good wage with food and clothing thrown in to seal the bargain. Mrs. Read knew just the lad the lady needed and forthwith produced Mary, whose winsome countenance and sturdy yet graceful figure gained her the place on the spot. So a footboy she became, sent her wages to her mother every week, and very soon became incredibly bored with a life she had no mind to. In her leisure hours she came to frequent a tavern used by seamen, learnt to swear a little and heard gorgeous crimson lies spun about the Spanish Main.

She listened to them for a year, then ran away from her mistress's scullery, got by hook or crook on board a

man-of-war lying off the Hoe and enlisted in her Majesty's Navy as a cabin boy, powder monkey, or what you will, provided she be allowed to stay on board. She was just fourteen and looked a strong boy, clear-eyed and almost too handsome. She was allowed to stay, for enlistments were scarce in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Few seamen were inclined to sign-on under Rooke or Benbow to be shot by French or Spaniard, when in the West Indies, gold and rum were plenty and discipline and the cat unknown. So Mary found her ship and sailed away to Vigo and never again saw her mother, who, if still airy, was now no longer young.

To her extreme disappointment life on a British man-of-war in the year 1706, or thereabouts, proved not only barren of action and glory but extremely hard. The food was maggoty, the rum nauseated her, the watches robbed her of rest. Singly these objections did not suit her temperament. Together, they convinced her that fortune had better things in store so she deserted out of land in some Flemish port of call and went straight as the crow flies into dangers and alarums. Marlborough had just fought the battle of Ramillies and for a time, thoroughly smashed the French. His name was on every man's lips, his army was the smithy that forged the truest and most gallant blades in Europe. Mary, arriving, Heaven knows how, in middle Flanders, deemed

him a hero worthy of her dreams and enlisted as a cadet in one of his regiments of foot. A big girl for her age, she looked well in her uniform and in several minor actions won the esteem of her officers and the respect of her comrades, none of whom seemed ever to have doubted that the beautiful boy who fought with such right good will against the levies of Vendôme was not a boy at all, but something for which they would have cared much more.

However, a cadet in a regiment of foot she remained in spite of her bravery, a circumstance that little suited her ambition. Commissions being bought or sold in such regiments and therefore beyond the reach of a cadet who was poor in purse, however rich in spirit, she resigned this service and joined a regiment of horse, with which dashing fellowship she performed such valorous deeds and kept her equipment and accouterments so smartly that she was soon in a fair way to become an officer. And then, all of a sudden, her sex which she had so long and successfully concealed, turned upon her and betrayed her.

She had as a friend and companion a young Fleming who had, upon her enlistment, befriended her and taught her how to ride, and to handle her weapons at a charge, and other details necessary in the education of a Cavalryman. This young man was a handsome fellow

and the more Mary saw of him the more she felt her manhood ebb in her and her womanhood rise. Indeed, to the astonishment of the man himself as well as to the rest of the regiment, Private Read became less and less interested in soldiering, allowed his uniform and mount and weapons to go uncared for and seemed bent on destroying his chances for his commission. There came a day when Mary could withhold her affection no longer and determined to be a girl to her Fleming even if it proved her ruin. Since they shared the same tent an opportunity was not slow in coming. As her personable fellow trooper was preparing his blankets to receive his repose in one corner of the little canvased rectangle Mary proceeded to open wide her tunic, a thing she had never done before, on the pretense of examining the scar of a bullet wound received weeks before in a brush with the enemy. The stalwart Fleming, having arranged things to his liking, turned from his blankets to receive the greatest if the pleasantest shock of his life. Pop-eyed and panting he sat as one transfixed. He rubbed his eyes lest he be dreaming and whispered in Dutch the equivalent of "adorable." He was as one enchanted. But his primary conclusions proved incorrect. As observed a contemporary chronicler ". . . he found himself strangely mistaken, for she proved very reserved and modest and resisted all

his temptations, and at the same time was so obliging and insinuating in her carriage, that she quite changed his purpose, so far from thinking of making her his mistress, he now courted her for a wife."

And court her he did, assiduously, until the campaign was over. Its termination was a huge relief to him since he worried ceaselessly lest his sweetheart be reported a casualty and he rode always near her to protect her. But now that Mary had made sure of his love she fought again with the best of them and seemed to require no help but her own sword-arm. When the regiment went into winter quarters he proposed with great formality and was accepted and, dressed for the first time in her life since babyhood in women's clothes, Mary was publicly married to her Fleming. Her wedding was the chief event of the winter season that year in Flanders. Gossips had been at work and their intent had been so friendly that many officers attended and a purse was collected to which even Marlborough contributed so that when all the rice had been flung Mary and her husband found much gold in it. So much, indeed, that on their discharge they were able to buy "The Three Horse Shoes," an excellent tavern in Breda, near the castle, where, for a year or two, they did a thriving business catering to the quality of the Allied Armies. In fact fortune proved all at once so generous that it seemed

as if Mary need never go adventuring after her favors again, but as usual the jade proved fickle. The handsome Fleming died, the Peace of Ryswick took away her trade and off Mary had to go, once more in breeches, that had never a copper in their pockets.

In Holland she resumed her profession as a soldier and enlisted in a regiment of foot but there was no fighting toward and no preferment. Desperate, she deserted, and making her way to a seaport, signed articles on a Dutch ship bound for Jamaica and the Spanish Main, her destiny now hard upon her heels. Running free in half a gale of wind southwestward through the Windward Passage for Port Royal her craft was spoken by a smart sloop of that type used by the logwood cutters. The sloop, beating to windward, hove to and, unwisely, the Dutchman followed suit with a great slatting and banging of canvas. Whereupon the sloop broke out her jack and ensign upon which bunting the horrified merchantman's master remarked the skull and bones, but before he could put his ship upon a course of flight his deck was overrun by whiskered villains who snapped pistols at his head and menaced him with cutlasses. The pirates plundered their prey with thoroughness but being, apparently, in gentler spirits than usual, forebore to slaughter or maroon captain or crew. This last, being composed entirely of Dutchmen, with the exception of

Mary, were to the gentleman adventurers, Englishmen all, but little better than cattle anyway and hardly worthy of their steel, but they suggested forcibly that Mary join them since she was English and a likely-looking hand. "Why, look ye," pointed out their captain, tenderly prodding her in the ribs with his point, "Why, look ye, God damn me blood, sail with me and ye'll drink doubloons, but an ye won't, rather than leave an English lad on a Hollands mud scow, God blast me eyes, I'll slit your bone case." So Mary jumped her ship, leaving the gutted merchantman wallowing in irons. This was in the full summer of 1717, a lean season, for neither pirate captain nor pirate crew drank doubloons and so put back to Nassau on the Island of Providence in the last days of August to learn, when they made port, of the King's Proclamation of Pardon and the near arrival of Governor Woodes Rogers. The master of the pirate sloop was one of those who followed Captain Jennings into the fold and his crew proved either like-minded or shipped with Vane and Rackam to run full of rum and wickedness, out of the Island's harbor, as the King's ships came in.

Mary, then a lady adventurer in dead earnest, sailed with these, and her destiny now inclosed her in its grip. On October 23rd, off Long Island, Vane took a small brigantine, John Shattuck, master, bound from Jamaica

to Salem in Massachusetts. In the last gale-driven days of November he spoke a large ship, broke out his black flags and made ready to board, joyful that he had a prize at last to repay him for the lean pickings that had characterized this autumnal cruise. But to his astonishment the ship loosed a broadside on him, let fly her ensign and disclosing herself to be a French man-of-war, proved resolute to sink him fifty fathoms in the sea. Vane, in a very healthy terror, hoisted all sail and ran away to leeward while his men disputed around him as to whether they should make a fight or a flight of it. Rackam, quartermaster and chief officer, abetted by the war-like Mary and a dozen more, was absolute for combat, bellowing "that though she (the Frenchman) had more guns, and a greater weight of metal, they might board her, and then the best boys would carry the day." Vane and his party, though in the minority, maintained that it were far better to live to fight another day without fighting on this one, and continued to work their brigantine out of danger. As the decisive vote on fighting, chasing or being chased rested with the captain, and the brigantine had the heels of the man-of-war, the pirates soon were hull-down to their pursuers, and ceased to crowd on canvas. Whereupon Rackam's party, led by himself and Mary, "tipped," as Stevenson terms it, "the blackspot" to Vane and his party, deposed him

from command and shipping him and his followers in a small sloop previously captured, provisioned it and bade them sail away and be damned for cowards. Which they did and were shortly afterwards not only damned for cowards but hanged for pirates with all of Port Royal there to see. As for Rackam, or Calico Jack, as he was called, since his drawers and jackets were constructed uniquely from that material, he sailed away in the brigantine with his staunch lieutenant Read, and the two of them plundered so many merchantmen in the next two years that in 1719 they had to go ashore at Prince's Island and bury their loot. This they did, golden coins and rich materials in casks, and "Bales of Silk Stockings, and laced Hats, with which, it is supposed, they intended to make themselves fine." An indication, perhaps, that whatever feminine instincts Mary had cast away, she still retained that one that pleads for personal adornment. While they were caching all of this they learned from the master of a turtling sloop that war had been declared between England and Spain and that the Royal Pardon had been renewed, upon which Calico Jack elected to receive it and against Mary's vigorous demur, eventually did so. In the middle of May, 1719, after touching at the Isle of Pines and at Cuba, Rackam and his crew fetched Nassau where, reeking with bland hypocrisies, they all save Read the irreconcilable, en-

tered into Governor Rogers' graces. But only while it suited them, for Rackam was in a few months once again iniquitously engaged upon the high seas, and with him this time not only one woman but two. For on this cruise sailed that other and more peccant lady adventurer, Anne Bonny.

Anne, though like Mary, a handsome girl, well-formed and stalwart, with blue eyes and curling, chestnut hair, lacked her genuine goodness of heart though not a whit of her courage. The illegitimate daughter of a well-to-do gentleman of Cork in Ireland, by a serving wench, she kept house for her father until she was sixteen, when she unwisely engaged herself to a penniless young seaman and got herself turned out of doors for doing so. Whereupon her tar married her, not without disappointment that no dower was forthcoming, and sailed away with her to the Island of Providence. There they lived well enough and passably happy until her husband returned home one tropic night to find her conducting herself in a manner not at all consonant with the morals of good society in the eighteenth century. The situation in which Anne, a man and a hammock all played leading rôles, convinced the honest seaman that his wife was not all that she should be and the more so because the man was an ebony faced villain in whiskers and calico who, a waif word had it, was a re-

formed pirate notorious on the Spanish Main as Captain Rackam. The husband was further outraged by this villain's proposing to him that, for a round sum of money, he sign his wife away to the bold true-hearted mariner who stood there before him, and that he do so speedily since his wife was mad for love of the dashing fellow in question. Speechless with rage, the injured family man stayed no longer parleying but quitting his porch where Anne, the man and the hammock still remained, he sped away to Governor Rogers. That dignitary heard him with gravity and commanded Anne and her pirate prince instantly into his presence. Examining the girl he commented privily that a more toothsome doxy he had never before seen, nor, for that matter, a more brazen one. For her ears and those of the impenitent Rackam he spoke in this wise: "Now look ye, mistress, and look ye too, my master, an your conduct one with another consort not hereafter with my wishes and those of your good man; wench, I gaol ye both within the hour of your offending and have ye soundly flogged, ye I mean, my pretty, so do not bridle, and ye, my bold fellow, will e'en flog her. Now get hence."

The trio made exit, the husband jubilant, the wife a bundle of angry passion and Rackam morose. But a week later he made sail, ostensibly a privateer on the King's business, and when Anne's good man returned

home from a day's turtling, he found his lady gone, fled, so his black man informed him, in breeches with a pestilent loud knave in calico.

Now as has been observed, Mary Read, in her capacity as Rackam's lieutenant, sailed too, but it must be noted that never during her career as a lady adventurer had her companion pirates discovered that if something more than a woman, she was anything less of a man. Rackam never doubted that the handsome lad who sailed with him was, in point of truth, a far handsomer lass, but with Anne Bonny breeched and sharing the great cabin he soon became aware that lieutenant Read was far and away too personable a pirate. Three days out of Nassau, bound for the Great Abaco Island and the turtle Cays, he was near dying of an apoplectic rage when he beheld in his own quarters his mannish mistress clasping his agonized and embarrassed lieutenant round the neck. Lieutenant Read vanished in a valedictory of wondrous cursing and he who delivered it, making play with his heavy cutlass, indicated to Anne that a parallel instance would find its period in a massacred pirate whose name, however, would not be Rackam. A day or so afterwards Mary saw the necessity of disclosing her secret to the amorous Anne, and did so, strictly enjoining her to secrecy, but lest Calico Jack carry out his threat, Anne told him the startling news. To the great

credit of both Rackam and his mistress, the former scrupulously held his tongue and the latter made Mary her fast friend, so that the two fought always side by side encouraging and protecting one another.

Thus for a while in sweet accord Rackam and his lady adventurers sailed the seas, robbing many rich prizes, pressing into service the crews of these when so minded, and proving a very sore thorn in the side of the choleric Governor Rogers. In time Anne, about to present Rackam with a child, was landed in Cuba till her time should pass, and shortly afterwards Mary for the second time succumbed to the blandishments of love. A member of the crew pressed from a gutted Bristol trader, the object of her affections was a sturdy Somerset youth as honest as his appearance. Valiantly she warred against her heart for a fortnight but at last, sharing a watch with the fellow, she disclosed herself to him as before she had to her lamented Fleming. The result was just as satisfactory and the two plighted their troth, Rackam, it is pleasant to observe, thoroughly approving. There existed, however, one hitch. No parson sailed with them. Finally, however, they dispensed with the benefit of clergy, and thenceforth as she pathetically set forth at her trial, Mary "look'd upon her marriage to be as good a marriage in conscience, as if it had been done by a minister in church." Indeed her devotion to her husband

was astonishing and was never more admirably shown than in such a case as arose at Santiago whither Rackam had sailed to retrieve his Anne, who was safely delivered of his heir, and anxious to be at sea again. A day or so before land was raised, Mary's husband fell foul of a fellow pirate who challenged him to duel to the death with pistol and cutlass so soon as port was reached. The Bristol lad accepted bravely enough but Mary was in a panic. She feared lest her husband show the white feather, she feared lest he prove courageous, she lived in an icy agony of fear lest he be killed. When finally Santiago was reached and the crew landed to carouse, she locked her sailor into a grog shop cellar and appeared on the dueling ground herself, armed cap-a-pie. Though her opponent was a notable bully she made short work of him, so accomplished a hand had she become with weapons, and in point of fact, when she set her husband free from his rum-encumbered duress, he had one less enemy in the world. As was deposed in her favor by a contemporary, "she had fought before, when she had been insulted by some of those fellows, but now it was altogether in her lover's cause, she stood as it were betwixt him and death, as if she could not live without him." To the man's shame who was thus shielded, it must be said that at her trial he did not come forward, got clean away, and she would never tell his name save

that he was an honest man with whom she had planned to live honestly ashore. Rackam himself, before he swung, called him a poor squab who had allowed the prosecution to testify that his wife had discoursed to him in a monstrous fashion touching the joys of piracy. Asked what these were, King's Counsel averred that Mary had thus informed her husband: "She did not fear hanging—thought it no great hardship, for, were it not for that, every cowardly fellow would turn Pyrate, and so infest the seas, that men of courage must starve:—That if it was put to the choice of the pirates, they would not have the punishment less than Death, the Fear of which kept some dastardly Rogues honest, that many of those who are now cheating the widows and orphans, and oppressing their poor neighbors, who have no money to obtain justice, would then rob at sea, and the ocean would be crowded with Rogues, like the land, and no Merchant would venture out; so that the trade, in a little Time, would not be worth following." Even if Mary had remarked thus tartly, what there was monstrous about these words not even the presiding judge could perceive. Indeed, the court was inclined to consider them said wittily and well.

Rackam, clearing Santiago with his Anne once more aboard in breeches, and Mary and her husband safely united, returned to the inlets of the north and west

coasts of Jamaica and resumed his plundering. But his sands were running out and Retribution was in full sail hard on his wake, for news of his presence in those waters reached the Governor, and his Lordship lost no time in despatching, to bring him in, Captain Barnet, in a big sloop manned by an ample crew. But before that officer might close in, trouble was already brewing on the brigantine. For one thing Anne was wearying of her pirate prince. He was, she had discovered, a craven at heart in spite of what had occurred on the day that Vane had run from the French man-of-war. Standing inshore to board a schooner at anchor in a little, wild harbor near the Serpent's Mouth, Rackam, discovering it too late to be larger than he had planned for, and full of fight, had retired with his crew to the hold rather than to face a smart pistol fire. Anne and Mary, cutlasses in hand, had been the only ones to remain on deck and they had fought valiantly when the schooner's men came aboard. Failing to persuade the cowards in the hold to fall on, both had finally fired down upon them and thus convinced them that it were better to be killed by the enemy than by their own comrades, one of whom was their own captain's wench, so up they had come in the nick of time to save Anne from a cutlass stroke and Mary from a bullet. But though this affair passed safely off for the time being, it was not forgotten by the lady

adventurers. Anne, indeed, went so far as to use Rackam with some disdain and to hobnob quite openly with a very bad young man of the Spanish nation who, most unwisely, made an attempt to profit by her graciousness. He offended once only. As a physical specimen he was no match for the lass of County Cork, who so soundly, even brutally, thrashed him that the sad rogue went bruised and limping for a fortnight. All of this, however, bred discord, and Rackam was very swiftly aware that he must retrieve his reputation as a true blade or be in his turn "tipped the black spot." Consequently, cruising in the most westerly waters of Jamaica, he seized a small sloop, pressed her crew and, since it was a hot afternoon, very genially served rum punch to all hands, passed out tobacco pipes, and set himself to carousing. This was very well, thirsts were quenched, the good Virginia leaf made an odorous blue haze above the deck, and to Calico Jack's satisfaction, Anne seemed to forget her distaste of him. Everyone, even Mary and Anne, were amiably liquored when perhaps an hour before sunset, some one of them at the seaward rail of the brigantine which was lying to, descried against the brilliant west an alien sail. Rackam, informed, studied her as she drew nearer and blenched to his whiskered gills. Turning towards the company he seemed to be foaming with oaths. "God's blood and wounds, yonder be King's

men," he bellowed and skipped about like one demented. Mary cried orders and with all possible dispatch they made sail, lifted anchor and wore away seaward. Since the wind was westerly and on shore the stranger, which was in fact Barnet's sloop, ran past quite close to them without firing a shot, went about and on the same tack, took out after the heeling brigantine. It seemed for a little while that the latter, a notable fast sailer, might give her pursuer the slip, and Rackam recovered something of his composure, even tossing down a noggin of rum to the King's bad health, eventual death and damnation, but his braggadocio was ill-timed. Almost as he did so the wind failed, the ship came to an even keel and her sails slatted, empty bellied and flat. But to the horror of the pirates the sloop came right on, the foam curling away from her forefoot, her jack snapping in a brisk and mysterious air. Not so far to sea as the Brigantine she still caught a land breeze and when she reached the calm's rim her headway carried her to within a scant thirty feet of her prey.

In this dire situation for Calico Jack, only Mary and Anne preserved their fortitude. Running below they fetched up cutlasses and pistols and set to priming these with all the gallantry in the world. But arming themselves, they found that their skipper was proving, in

this, the last crisis of their lives, a poor empty bladder of a man, flabby and with no guts left to fight. Shrieking invective, they menaced him with their points in vain. Captain John Rackam had no stomach for combat, and when he boarded, Barnet took him without striking a blow. For the King's officer it must have been a strange sight. The poor quaking villain, his face in his hands, while on either side of him two handsome lads cursed at him for a shotten, craven swine. As the sloop's crew reached the brigantine's deck the lady adventurers, weeping with sheer rage, flung their cutlasses overboard, and seemed about to follow them when they were apprehended. It was a tragic ending for them who, in the crucial hour, had proved themselves more men in valor than those whose vaunted courage they had striven to emulate.

On November 16, 1720, at St. Jago de la Vega, Calico Jack and his crew, with the exception of Mary and Anne, were brought to trial before a Court of Admiralty, over which presided Sir Nicholas Laws. The poor rogues had no defense, made none, and were sentenced to death by hanging at Gallows Point at Port Royal. And there they hanged, swinging in the fresh sea breezes that they defiled, until one day Rackam was cut down and hanged again in chains at Plumb Point, a warning to

all gentlemen adventurers whose courage might prove not as great as their crimes. On the day of his death he begged that he might hold a last audience with Anne, a prisoner as yet untried, and the request, granted him, must have further embittered his end. For Anne, though manacled, had lost none of the violence of her passions. Her valedictory had been brief: "Why, look ye, Jack, I'm sorry to see ye here, but had ye fought like a man ye need not have hanged like a dog."

Mary and Anne were tried shortly afterwards and upon neither, for the same reason, were their sentences executed. Both girls were pregnant and remained in prison until their lying-in. Mary's trial, at which King's counsel rested his case on her confirmed desire to deal wickedly with honest folk as exampled in those words touching the risk of a pirate's career that have before been quoted, was brief and was rendered interesting only by her own defense. She told the story of her life and with infinite pathos begged that His Lordship would observe that though she had indeed been a pirate and lived in breeches, she had all her days comported herself with decency, and save with her two husbands, had never dealt with men save as men deal with men. Since the moral issue was a very important one with Sir Nicholas Laws and none could prove that she lied, her sentence, which was to be hanged as the others had been hanged,

was respited and finally she was granted a new trial. It seems to have been very generally admitted that she would have been dismissed this second time but the poor wench never again appeared before the bar. A fever struck her as she lay in prison and she died, murmuring words of endearment in Dutch, taught her in those happy days in Breda when she and her Fleming set the meat and wine before the men of Marlborough. She was seven and twenty years old, and, as her jailers noted, a brave appearing and very comely lass.

As for Anne, the blackest evidence against her proved to be her desertion of her honest tar in Nassau, since from this Sir Nicholas concluded her to be confirmed in all wicked practices, a lustful, thieving, oathing female, best made use of on the gallows. Returned to prison to await the birth of her child, she seems to have escaped, for no sentence was ever carried out upon her person. Perhaps she returned to Nassau and persuaded her husband, surely something of a dullard, that Rackam, the black rogue, had taken her away by force, and so proved herself chaste at least in spirit, but the chances are that the high seas and the black ensign exercised their ancient fascination. Perhaps she died like Blackbeard, in the loud core of battle, cutlass in one hand, in the other a pistol, and in her teeth a dirk. After 1720 there is no record of her doings, which is a pity,

for among those of other sea wolves, one finds no such wicked gallantry as was displayed by this lady adventurer, and particularly by the ill-fated Mary, her companion.

THE IRRESISTIBLE MONTEZ

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LOLA MONTEZ, IRISH BY BIRTH, SPANISH BY CHOICE, was by vocation, a ruler of men. More than a lovely woman who was content to reign in drawing rooms and boudoirs as a blue stocking or royal favorite, she applied a vigorous intelligence to coöperate with physical perfection and actually molded the policies of one not inconsiderable nation in opposition to those sponsored by one of the first ministers of the age, and, incredibly, triumphed. Metternich, who could name the great Napoleon as a victim of his statecraft, found no defense for beauty mated with mentality and courage, and was driven from the ground whereon he was so accustomed to win victory, leaving behind him not only his wits but his dignity. Lola in her time ruled absolute in nineteenth-century Bavaria.

But ruling Bavaria was only an incident in the career of the diva who counted among her admirers a king of Bavaria, a lord-lieutenant of Ireland, an emperor of Russia, a ruler of Poland and two men who created for mankind more felicity than any of these, Alexandre Dumas, and Franz Liszt. She adventured blithely about the world as gentle in victory as a summer evening, in

adversity as hard as a Toledo blade, utterly fearless, utterly beautiful, a Cleopatra who would not have fled at Actium, an Aspasia who would have personally so thrashed Hermippus that he would have withdrawn his charges, howling, before the judges. Lecturing in London in one month, the next she was in New York while the inhabitants of that city in the dim and fabled fifties, paid a dollar to shake her hand, and then off again to swell the gold rush to California and to horsewhip an abusive yellow journalist in Australia. Like summer lightning she flickered wonderfully and dangerously above the horizons of many men, some of whom attained her and were blasted, gratefully enough, in the attaining.

Born on July 3rd, 1818, in Limerick, the only daughter of Ensign Edward Gilbert of the 25th regiment of the line in the British Army, and his wife, who had been a Miss Oliver of Castle Oliver, doubtless a distinguished place to hail from in the Kingdom of Ireland, she was christened Maria Dolores Eliza Rosanna, the first two of which names in honor of an ancestral Castilian grandee on the distaff side, the Count of Montalvo. Hence there was some justice in the claim she later made for Spanish blood. Her mother, Mrs. Edward Gilbert, was a notable beauty, the toast of the regiment, one of those Irish women whose serene comeliness of feature, black hair

and blue eyes, cracked hearts like China tea cups and filled aged generals and new-hatched subalterns with the same hopeless folly of anticipation. When Lola was four this lady accompanied her husband, now of the 44th regiment of the line, to India, carrying her baby girl like a small bundle and entrancing passengers who would have found four months at sea otherwise passing tedious. Landing in Calcutta, Ensign Gilbert found himself shortly afterwards transferred to Dinapore, at which gay post his wife flirted genteelly and danced the polka, his beautiful baby chuckled perennially on the shoulders of port-wine-complexioned senior officers and where he himself, poor man, died one rainy day of cholera. His untimely decease left the post in a quandary. Who would be the lucky lad to win his relict, the colleen of Castle Oliver? After a time during which men ordinarily friends were rude one to another and positively insulting to strangers, Gilbert's best friend, Major Craigie, emerged victor from the ruck of suitors. Craigie, a good conscientious officer, adored his wife and step-child second only to his profession and, it is believed, made Lola's mother forever after a happy woman. Unfortunately, perhaps, for Lola, he exercised over her a very brief dominion, for in 1826 she was sent home to prosecute a polite education, an exceedingly fascinating little girl even at the age of eight.

Lola, it may well be imagined, found Montrose, the Scots town where resided her step-father's relatives, a dour and cheerless place after the riot of sunlight and flowers that had been Dinapore. Nevertheless she suffered with equanimity both the reticent caresses of the elder Craigies and the application of their educational theories until she was again dispatched to new fields, this time to the household of Sir Jasper Nicolls, K. C. B., Major-General in the Indian Service, who retired in 1831, taking under his wing the stepdaughter of an old friend. Sir Jasper, like so many distinguished English soldiers, while ready to die for England, preferred not to die in it, and repaired to Paris where, with his own daughter, Lola absorbed all the electric inspiration and romantic overtones that that city afforded. She returned to England with Fanny Nicolls to achieve at Bath the last cultural touches and at eighteen heard that her mother, whom she barely remembered, was sailing to join her.

Mrs. Craigie for a year or so had heard rumors of her daughter's remarkable beauty and indeed had already selected for her a satisfactory husband in the person of Sir Abraham Lumley, rich, prominent, gouty, and sixty years of age, before ever sailing for England. Arrived in Bath, squired by an inconsiderable lieutenant of the 21st regiment of native infantry for whom she had had some

kindnesses on board ship, she found that whatever her own beauty had been in her 'teens, it was, compared to the flame of Lola's, a candle set against a beacon light. The child was positively radiant. She was not only a beauty, but a great beauty, something very rare and untouched, a force destined to work many men like wax to its desires. Mrs. Craigie, contemplating her, felt a little frightened. She doubted whether any man of sixty might hold in jesses such a falcon of love as this. Guilefully she made no mention of Sir Abraham but dazzled Lola by purchases of all manner of beautiful garments until the girl sought for a reason for all this expenditure. Mrs. Craigie gave her none, observing that inquisitive misses came to no good ends, but the inconsiderable lieutenant of native infantry, Mr. Thomas James, suddenly achieved at this juncture the importance of an open throttle directing the vehicle of Lola's career. The wretched fellow had of course fallen in love, slavishly, though for this he could not be blamed. Perceiving Lola's mystification he gambled on the passion of her nature. "Why," he remarked, "all this is your trousseau," and the mine beneath Mrs. Craigie's plans was exploded. Lola leapt at him like a dueling sword in the hand of a maître d'armes. Lieutenant James, in the parlance of the police courts, "came clean" and he painted a portrait of the gouty sexagenarian palpitat-

ing in Calcutta for his promised bride that equaled Hogarth's of the old fox, Lord Lovat. Faced with all of this, Mrs. Craigie informed her daughter that she would be very shortly Lady Lumley and that remonstrance was unavailing. Lola stormed, tragically beautiful as Medea, then grew silent and seemed to acquiesce. The next day she eloped in a post-chaise with Lieutenant Thomas James and a day or two later fled to Ireland.

Mrs. Craigie, like one who had swallowed a tiny Vesuvius, erupted threats and tears to no purpose. On July 23rd, 1837, Lola and Lieutenant James were married in County Meath and Mrs. Craigie returned to break the news to the dolorous old man in Calcutta. But Lola, married in haste, was doomed to justify the old saying, however trite it might be to do so. Lord Normanby, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, fell at once beneath her feet, followed by the more gallant members of his staff. Frolic with pleasure, Lola paid almost at once for her gratification. James, jealous on the spot, hurried her away from the vice-regal court and planted her in a peat-bog, to remain unconsoled by aught save continuous dishes of Herculean tea and frantic brogues. She thought to die of boredom and was saved in the nick of time by the orders recalling her husband to India. Remembering Calcutta she became once again gay, and at sea played Circe to crew and passengers, who like en-

chanted swine followed her about for the kernels of her words and the husks of her smiles, while James bit his finger nails below or drank porter until he slept, snoring with a sound as of hiving bees. The Honorable Emily Eden, sister of Lord Auckland, Viceroy of India from 1836 to 1842, notes in her letters the travelers' arrival in Simla in the hills:

"Simla is much moved just now by the arrival of a Mrs. James, who has been talked of as a great beauty of the year, and that drives every other woman, with any pretensions in that line, quite distracted. . . . Mrs. James is the daughter of a Mrs. Craigie who is still very handsome herself, and whose husband is Deputy Adjutant-General, or some military authority of that kind. She sent this only child to be educated at home, and went home herself two years ago to see her. On the same ship was Mr. James, a poor ensign, going home on sick leave. Mrs. Craigie nursed him and took care of him, and took him to see her daughter, who was a girl of fifteen (in actuality she was eighteen) at school. He told her he was engaged to be married, consulted her about his prospects, and in the meantime privately married this girl at school. It was enough to provoke any mother, but as it now cannot be helped, we have all been trying to persuade her for the last year to make it up, as she frets dreadfully about her only child. She has withstood it till

now, but at last consented to ask them for a month, and they arrived three days ago. The rush on the road was remarkable, and one or two of the ladies were looking absolutely nervous. But nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the result, for Mrs. James looked lovely, and Mrs. Craigie had set up a very grand jonpaun (kind of sedan-chair) with bearers in fine orange and brown liveries, and the same for herself; and James is a sort of smart-looking man, with bright waistcoats and bright teeth, with a showy horse, and he rode along in an attitude of respectful attention to 'ma belle-mere.' Altogether it was an imposing sight, and I cannot see any way out of it but magnanimous admiration. They all called yesterday when I was at the waterfalls and Fanny thought her very pretty."

And so did Lola return to India. A little later that kindly noblewoman, the Honorable Miss Eden, observes that, "She (Lola) is very pretty, and a good little thing apparently, but they are very poor, and she is very young and lively, and if she falls into bad hands she would soon laugh herself into foolish scrapes. At present the husband and wife are very fond of each other, but a girl who marries at fifteen hardly knows what she likes." A Sybil could have written no more prophetically. Inside of a very few months the besotted James eloped with a Mrs. Lomer, a woman of a certain age and

an unwalled virtue, and Lola went home to England again, at the instance of the Craigies, to laugh herself into a scrape at sea and to despise for the rest of her days her first and least loved mate. The scrape in question was a love affair on board ship with a sleek, personable and contemptible rascal named Lennox who, despite the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Sturges and Mrs. Stevens, honest Yankees who had taken the beautiful girl unofficially in charge, talked and ogled his way into Lola's heart. Landed in England, Lennox disappeared after a little while and Lola next heard of him as corespondent in a suit of divorce filed against her by the unregenerate James. Sublimely, she ignored the whole proceedings and a judicial separation was therefore effected in December, 1842. James and Lennox thereafter fade from the scene. Blackguards both, they seem both to have been dolts of the first water. Doubtless had Cytherea herself appeared to them they would have yawned and proposed to blackmail her for her lack of clothing.

In the meantime Lola was alone in London, having refused to go to the Craigie connections in Perth, with a capital of about ten thousand dollars and a burning desire to wrest fame or prosperity or both, single-handed from a world that she was beginning to believe hard and not a little brutal. How many other girls, similarly dowered with beauty, have sought to do the same? But Lola,

as many men were to discover, had more than beauty, she had brains and a preposterous courage and she used both. She went to Miss Fanny Kelly, directress of a dramatic school for women, and engaged to learn to dance, and learn she did, for on the 3rd of June, 1843, she appeared between the acts of the opera, *The Barber of Seville*, given at Her Majesty's Theater, in an original Spanish dance "El Olano." She was heralded upon the playbills as "Donna Lola Montez of the Teatro Real, Seville." With the assumption of the name of Montez she buried forever, or so she hoped, the identity of the wife of Lieutenant James and, but for an abominable piece of bad luck, would not only have done so successfully but would have become famous over night. The piece of bad luck, however, ruined all and was among the crowded audience, curled and scented like a lap-dog and eye-glassed like a dowager, in the person of Lord Ranelagh, an evil young nobleman who had made proposals to Lola that had well merited the violent rebuff that they had encountered. Ranelagh, as Lola commenced her dance, cried out, "Why, it's Betty James," and set himself to hiss with a rancid fervor bred of a grievance and a bitterly injured pride. His toadies followed suit and despite the applause of the house, killed the act. Next day, though the public prints enthusiastically praised her dancing, Lola realized that her virtue had cost her her career in

England. Lordlings like Ranelagh ruled the boards and if she would not pay their price she might not play or dance either. The evening of the day after found her outward bound from England, her heart set now on higher stakes and vaguely in her mind the thought of crowns for counters.

Like a new comet candent in startled skies she passed through Brussels, Berlin, and Dresden too quickly for men to study or appraise her, but she left the memory of a charm like Helen's behind her. In Warsaw, shackled beneath the foot of the terrible Russian Paskievich, she arrived one day with a man whom she did not love but who, naturally enough, loved her and so at her instance secured for her an engagement at the Opera. She filled both the engagement and the theater and next morning found the fame denied her in London. "Lola," so chorused the Warsaw press, "possesses twenty-six of the twenty-seven points on which a Spanish writer insists as essential to feminine beauty—and the real connoisseurs among my readers will agree with me when I confess that blue eyes and black hair appear to me more ravishing than black eyes and black hair. The points enumerated by the Spanish writer are: three white—the skin, the teeth, the hands; three black—the eyes, the eyelashes and eyebrows; three red—the lips, the cheeks, the nails; three long—the body, the hair, the

hands; three short—the ears, the teeth, the legs; three broad—the bosom, the forehead, the space between the eyebrows; three full—the lips, the arms, the calves; three small—the waist, the hands, the feet; three thin—the fingers, the hands, the hips. All these perfections are Lola's, except as regards the color of her eyes, which I for one, would not wish to change. Silky hair, rivaling the gloss of the raven's wing, falls in luxuriant folds down her back; on the slender, delicate neck, whose whiteness shames the swan's down, rests the beautiful head. How, too, shall I describe Lola's bosom, if words fail me to describe the dazzling whiteness of her teeth? What the pencil could not portray, certainly the pen cannot. . . . Lola's little feet hold the just balance between the feet of the Chinese and French ladies. Her fine, shapely calves are the lowest rungs of a Jacob's ladder leading to Heaven. She reminds one of the Venus of Cnidus, carved by Praxiteles in the 104th Olympiad. To see her eyes is to be satisfied that her soul is throned in them. . . . Her eyes combine the varying shade of the sixteen varieties of forget-me-not . . ." e poi da capo.

The Poles, always susceptible to beauty, threw their hearts at her feet like bouquets. As for Paskievich, that ruthless autocrat felt anew in his sin-hardened old arteries the flood tides of love. He sent for Lola and proposed to endow her with a magnificent country de-

mesne and diamonds enough to hide her in the pale fire of a coruscating sheath, if she would be his maîtresse-en-titre. Tactlessly, perhaps, Lola declined with laughter, and ordered the great man's chamberlain, sent to further his master's suit, incontinent from her rooms. Paskievich, who had knouted half naked women nearly to death for far less, sent constables to eject her from Poland and these found the Diva waiting for them with a pistol to shoot down the first man to lay hands on her. Further performances at the Opera were hissed down by claques hired by the tyrant but Polish Warsaw was with her to a man. She seemed destined to promote a revolution when at her friends' behests, she fled the city for St. Petersburg. She was not so naïve as to think that Paskievich could be intimidated and she had heard enough about the vicious old tiger's methods to prefer flight to lacerating misery beneath the thongs. The Tartar, even so, she preferred to the Englishman. Ranelagh would have been too cowardly to persecute openly.

In the Russian Capitol the Tsar Nicholas I, abetted by his favorite minister, Benkendorf, was far less crude in his methods of courtship. Indeed, Lola, doubtless flattered by his very sincere respect for her advice on matters of state and her genuine political acumen, so far forgot her hatred for autocracy as to think highly of him. When she left the Russias for Dresden, the Tsar

was grieved, though he saw her soon afterwards in charmingly unquiet circumstances. The occasion was a grand review of the Prussian army held by King Frederick William in honor of Nicholas. Lola, splendidly mounted, was present, and her steed, frightened no doubt by loud drums and louder colors, bolted, and had the good taste to do so into the royal party. An ill-advised constable struck at the curveting horse and received in return a cut across the face from Lola's crop that shook him to his heels. Next day she was waited upon with a summons which she tore in pieces, and strange to say the matter ended there. Doubtless the remembering Tsar had dropped a word to his host, just a word, touching an old tenderness. . . .

But for Lola there were far more momentous things toward in Dresden than royal reviews and contumacious constables. Franz Liszt was there, the pride and bitter darling of Europe, and meeting Lola, he recharged his lonely heart from hers. Liszt and Lola loved flamingly, at once, and it might be said that of all her loves this was the dearest and most cherished. Supremely beautiful, supremely passionate, proud, and more courageous than many men, she brought to Liszt, weary of the carte du tendre of romanticist salons, an antithesis for which he longed. Exchanging a tepid romanticism for a dynamic animalism tempered with intellect, he touched life anew.

The liaison lasted not long but for both it brought fulfillment and delight. Lola went on to Paris, Liszt perhaps with her, but if so he wandered on again, alone, southward, over the Pyrenees. In Paris, Lola stayed. She had danced in London, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg, now she would dance in Paris. The first two ventures had been destroyed by enemies, the last saved by the spell of Cytherea. Would Paris even the score?

On the 30th of March, 1844, she appeared at the Opera in a Halévy piece in two acts entitled *Il Lazzarone*. Gautier, reviewing this, next day, definitely decides the question of her ability as a danseuse: "We suspect, after the recital of her equestrian exploits, that Mlle. Lola is more at home in the saddle than on the boards." The author of *Mademoiselle de Maupin* is, in point of fact, quite just in this ungallant dictum. Lola's surpassing beauty carried her acts, but technically, no critic might praise her dancing. Fortunately, Paris savored beauty like old wine, dancing with less precision, so that the public applauded though the critics carped. Nevertheless Lola did not dance again at the Opera, but she did not despair. Her beauty drew the great men of Paris about her like bees. Claudin observes:

"Lola Montez was an enchantress. There was about her something provoking and voluptuous which drew you. Her skin was white, her wavy hair like tendrils of the

woodbine, her eyes tameless and wild, her mouth like a budding pomegranate. Add to that a dashing figure, charming feet and perfect grace. . . ." The judgment of Paris. . . . Dumas and Méry, De Girardin and Dujarier, Roger de Beauvoir and many another fell in love with her and squired her about as did the bullies of Benvenuto, when that superb Rodomont was wont to walk abroad among the blades of his enemies. Dujarier she loved and was to have married had not an enemy, infuriated by the brilliant young journalist's attacks, shot him down in a duel which constituted one of the causes célèbres of the century. Lola and Dumas testified at the criminal proceedings which resulted, and after them, Lola left Paris for Bavaria, genuinely bereaved and footloose once more.

She arrived in Munich to find it contented but vaguely fearful beneath the rule of the great king, Louis I, for that monarch, after years of liberal administration, had suddenly lent an ear to the reactionary party fostered by the Catholics and Prince Metternich, the Ultramontane minister. She secured directly an engagement at the Court Theater, danced, reaped an ovation, and sought an immediate audience with Louis. Bored, he received her, checked a yawn, and with difficulty regained a swiftly lost composure. A day or two later he turned to one of his ministers and laid his cards on the

table. "I know not how—I am bewitched." It was true. A good ruler, an amateur of the arts, a bibliophile, a poet and one-time distinguished soldier, Louis at one and sixty offered utterly without reserve his qualities as a man and a king to his enchantress. The Ultramontane Jesuitical party raged in vain. Lola at once bent her influence to restore the liberal dominion while Metternich simmered in Austria and the King's ministry presented memoranda imploring the woman's dismissal. Louis laughed. "I will not give Lola up. I will never give up that noble princely being. My kingdom for Lola." To her palace in the Barerstrasse court chamberlains came to inform her that she had been raised to the Peerage as Countess of Landsfeld and Baroness Rosenthal. Canoness of the order of St. Theresa, she shared this honor with the Queen herself and found each morning in her mails, poems royally composed which constituted an honor which the Queen did not share. Louis was even less of a poet than was Lola a dancer, but he possessed one great attribute, sincerity. A sonnet, translated from the German, animadverts thus upon their alliance:

"Men strive with restless zeal to separate us;
Constantly and gloomily they plan thy destruction;
In vain, however, are always their endeavors,
Because they know themselves alone, not us.

Our love will bloom but the brighter for it all—
What gives us bliss cannot be divorced from us—
Those endless flames which burn with sparkling light,
And pervade our existence with enrapturing fire.
Two rocks are we, against which constantly are breaking
The adversaries' craft, the enemies' open rage;
But, scorpion-like, themselves, they pierce with deadly sting—
The sanctuary is guarded by trust and faith;
The enemies' cruelty will be revenged on themselves.
Love will compensate for all that we have suffered."

As poetry, even as Mr. Jeffrey said touching Wordsworth's "Excursion," this will never do. Sad stuff, though possibly in the original a little less so. But, without shadow of doubt, sincere. Poor Louis! The Ultramontane party with Metternich pulling the wires, though badly beaten, had no intention of playing the scorpion. By devious methods they corrupted the placid Müncheners and frightened them fearfully by pointing out that Lola would injure their business, sour their beer, and dissipate their sausages. The burghers, happy save when their livelihoods seemed threatened, rioted in the Barerstrasse while Lola from her balcony laughed as at an opéra bouffe, toasted them in champagne and flung

them chocolates. She bought a bull-dog which, all in fun no doubt, bit a townsman who retaliated with a whip. Lola smote the man shrewdly on the ear and took refuge in a shop while the man and his friends bellowed gutturally for satisfaction. The University, strongly Jesuitical, abetted the Metternich faction and was threatened with padlocking. On one side Lola wielded the scepter, Louis abetted and chuckled, and the Bavarians frothed as in paroxysms of the rabies. Though she ruled well for the Liberals, Lola could not sufficiently fortify her position. Things could not last as they were. In January, 1848, the students rioted dangerously and Lola did what few men would have cared to do, faced them singly in the street and was forced to find sanctuary in the Church of the Theatines. "Very well," she dispassionately remarked, "I will have the University closed." But for once Louis failed to coöperate and this failure destroyed them both. The Revolutionary party struck swiftly and with effect. Lola fled Munich and in March Louis abdicated. So ended her reign in Bavaria and it may be justly observed that had Louis been forty instead of sixty-two the University would have been closed, the Ultramontane faction crushed and her influence assured. That her Liberal policies were sound, none but the Jesuits denied, but Bavaria was not yet ready for their prosecution.

When Lola, after passing through Switzerland, reached London, no longer uncrowned queen of a prosperous nation, she was thirty years old and still the most beautiful woman in Europe. But already she was weary of passions and potentates and desired a home and a husband and all the semitones of a normal domestic felicity. Cornet George Trafford Heald of the Second Life Guards, a nice boy, wealthy and well-connected, sued for her hand and she gave it, hoping that at last life might come to her peacefully, a gentle stream and not the torrent that it had been in the past. But Lola's luck was ever bad. Married at St. George's in Hanover Square, the young couple were no sooner into their marriage coach than an aged spinster aunt of the groom's, laying hands on facts relating to that judicial separation from James a decade before, brought suit against her for bigamy. Miss Susanna Heald, Zanthippe deprived of a patient Socrates, hated beauty and loathed the seductions of sex, or at least as possessed by the internationally famous Countess of Landsfeld. She sought to ruin Lola and in effect ruined not only her but her nephew. The young Healds fled their bail and went to the Continent where a disparity of temperament soon drove the marriage upon the rocks. In London, settled in domesticity, they might have lived happily, but adventuring abroad proved Heald no mate for Lola. They

separated in a year or so and Miss Susanna Heald found, it is hoped, at the Great Compt due reward for her meddling. Heald, poor well-meaning fellow, was drowned soon afterwards, while Lola, wearying a little of life, was westward bound to try her luck in the United States.

She arrived in New York upon the same boat with Kossuth and such was the glamor of her name that she shared the public interest occasioned by the patriot's arrival. The *New York Tribune* for the 6th of December, 1851, reported her appearance at some length, observing in part:

"She states that many bad things have been said about her by the American press, yet she is not the woman she has been represented to be: if she were, her admirers, she believes, would be still more numerous. (A neat thrust, that.) She expresses herself fearful that she will not be properly considered in New York, but hopes that a discriminating public will judge of her after having seen her, and not before."

As Gautier had observed, however, Lola was wont to betray herself before the footlights. At the Broadway Theater in *Betly the Tyrolean,* a musical comedy written expressly for her, she opened on December 27th. The piece closed on January 19th. Hazarding Philadelphia, quite naturally she failed. Again at the Broadway she

played the lead in a dramatized version of her Bavarian conquest and was unemployed after five performances. New York, having gazed its fill, stuffed its consciousness with beauty unequipped with histrionic excellence

and in anecdotes served it up again with garnishings when a later generation chortled over *The Black Crook*. Lola played no more, handicapped by the lack of such a one as Morris Gest and the Madonna niche in such a vehicle, say, as *The Miracle*, but she stuffed her pockets with dollars received from goggling citizens who paid to call at her hotel and shake her hand. In many ways she had no need of a manager. Spring found her in New Orleans bound for gold-ribbed California and in July she startles us by marrying in San Francisco an Ohioan,

Patrick Purdy Hull, editor of the San Francisco *Whig*. Back to normal in September she left Hull for a German big game hunter named Adler, and the two lived happily in Grass Valley until a bullet from his own gun killed the hunter and a landslide wiped out the home. Growing daily more weary of the operations of fortune upon her life, she sailed for Australia, and in Sydney on the 23rd of August, 1855, appeared at the Victoria Theater in *Lola Montez in Bavaria,* a four-act drama which had a vociferous success. Melbourne was next upon her itinerary and added to her finances. In Ballarat she displayed her ancient fire when one Seekamp, a mud-slinging yellow journalist, scurrilously attacked her in his paper, the *Times,* and on unwisely entering her hotel, received a horse-whipping which he not wholly successfully averted with his own crop. He was still lying his way out of this impasse for his reputation, when Lola sailed back to Europe, having girdled a globe with which, since the age of four, she had always made herself singularly free. Always a Continental celebrity, she was now a world-wide figure, but she was weary to death of it all. She was only thirty-eight but she had packed into her years a dozen lives.

In Paris she found that her exchequer was sadly depleted, chiefly because she spent her money as easily as she made it and had enriched a multitude of trades-

people with the considerable fortune amassed upon her tour. Convinced that the drama was not her proper foil she chose lecturing and was off again to New York in 1858 with a folio of titles, "Beautiful Women," "Gallantry," "Heroines of History," "The Comic Aspect of Love," "Wits and Women of Paris," and "Romanism." She spoke at the Hope Chapel at 720 Broadway on February 3rd, and was reported variously in the following morning's journals. "Lola Montez at Hope Chapel is good. It is plain that the scent of the roses hangs round her still. We have heard some queer things in that conventicle in our time, and have now and then assisted at an entertainment there twice as funny, but not half so intellectual nor half so wholesome, as the lecture our desperado in dimity gave us last night."

Intellectual, however, is hardly the word for her lectures. Judged coldly, they are, in a familiar argot, "tripe," but they pleased well enough even though Lola publicly observed that English women were more beautiful than American. In spite of this she made money and, encouraged, tried England again, competing in that country for the public interest with no less a one than the redoubtable P. T. Barnum. She was well but not munificently received. A fading beauty, great though this once had been, was a feeble lure in comparison to fully developed atomies in dress clothes, no larger than

small children. 1860 found her again in New York, a weary, disillusioned woman near to penury with her eyes the last outposts of the dominion of a once incomparable comeliness. For Lola, the mistress of kings and geniuses, apotheosis was narrowly at hand.

Once long ago in Montrose, there had been a Scots girl who had loved and admired the brilliant Anglo-Indian child sent to learn her lessons with the Craigies, far from Dinapore. Grown, she had gone to the New World, married an honest Scots florist named Buchanan and achieved felicity and prosperity in obscurity while her whilom friend flashed the fire of her beauty in the eyes of the world. And then one day in New York she encountered the once peerless Lola, ill and despairing, without friends or money. To the eternal credit of Mrs. Buchanan she ignored the obvious moral. Sustenance and shelter proved the alchemic combination that wrought of this splendid sinner a no less splendid Magdalen. Lola became a devout Episcopalian and repented with the last fires of her being. Her spiritual adviser, Doctor F. L. Hawks, writes that when near the end she was never so moving:

"She was a woman of genius, highly accomplished, of more than usual attainments, and of great natural eloquence. I listened to her sometimes with admiration, as with the tears streaming from her eyes, her right hand

uplifted, and her regularly expressive features (her keen blue eyes especially) speaking almost as plainly as her tongue, she would dwell upon Christ, and the almost incredible truth that He could show mercy to such a vile sinner as she felt herself to have been, until I would feel that she was the preacher and not I.

"When she was near her end, and could not speak, I asked her to let me know by a sign whether her soul was at peace, and she still felt that Christ would save her. She fixed her eyes on mine, and nodded her head affirmatively."

Lola died of paralysis on the 17th of January 1861, shriven and annealed, and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery beneath a simple tablet somewhat absurdly inscribed "Mrs. Eliza Gilbert," and with her dates.

Thus passed one who has been called the Cleopatra and the Aspasia of the nineteenth century. A very gallant and courageous lady certainly, and though she used her beauty and her mind not in accordance with the decalogue, worthy to be remembered as much for the excellent vigor of the latter as for the perfection of the former. Individual damnation or salvation in such a case as hers are matters of strict opinion, but for Lola's brief to the last judgment there is an ancient tag that might never be more aptly appended. Like the moral of her life it is exceeding trite, "Quia multum amavit."

BELLE STARR

BELLE STARR

COLE YOUNGER AND THE JAMES BOYS, THE DALTONS and Belle Starr. Names that five and thirty years ago in the West were more widely and somberly known than Geronimo's or Cochise's, the Apache chieftains, or those of the paranoiac slayers of Lincoln or General Garfield. Names that connoted savage courage and the glittering, reckless merit of utter contempt for death so that schoolboys were wont to read them with emotion and reporters with professional joy. And of them all the last was perhaps the most evilly illustrious though today the world forgets not only the sins but the virtues of an American woman of pure strain whose personality was so dynamic and whose life so violent that a famous Italian criminologist once designated her as the most formidable female offender against the laws of organized society ever recorded by man. Lombroso's doubtful compliment might have amused Belle had she lived to read it and its injustice would not have irked her. There are still old-timers in Arkansas, respected ancients of the Cherokee nation, or the old Indian Territory, who recall a nature hasty but without baseness and a gal-

lantry as flaming as Custer's own. Belle Starr, impeached and not softly, in the headlines of scores of contemporary journals as the American Bandit Queen, the Lady Desperado, the Petticoated Terror of the Plains, belongs less in a Western Newgate Calendar than in a more considerable chronicle of Homeric and super rogues.

Like Cole Younger, Jesse and Frank James, she found an early schooling in the swift and hazardous forays of the Confederate guerillas of Quantrell, and while still in her 'teens learned to ride scarce broken horses like a Comanche warrior, and to handle a rifle and the heavy pistols of the 'sixties with the smooth and steady accuracy of a veteran gunfighter. In a day when the West was a man's province and the frontiers were sown with the graves of masculine individuals who had gone into action a loud second too late, Belle put herself on an equal footing with the coolest of the so-called dominant sex and the sovereign proof that she succeeded in so doing one finds in the tragic record of her end. Among the bravi of the old Indian Territory, a reserve largely peopled with exceedingly unpleasant characters, she moved serenely, so indisputable a force that at the last death chose to strike her from behind.

Born in Carthage, Missouri, on February 3rd, 1846, of parents who possessed both wealth and standing in

their community, it is at first difficult to comprehend the reason for her erratic dashes within and without the law that in her childhood must have been inculcated into her consciousness. Her father, Judge John Shirley, besides conducting a notable hotel, administered justice in Carthage for a portion of his twenty-five years of residence in the town and there is no reason to believe that the infant Myra Belle grew up in an atmosphere otherwise than securely, even strictly, law-abiding. Perhaps it was too strictly so, though on the outbreak of the Civil War the judge seems to have insisted less on compliance with the country's laws. A Southerner, a man of many acres and more slaves, he rejoiced in the firing upon Sumter, took comfort in the news of the first battle at the creek called Bull Run, and enthusiastically abetted his son Edward's design to join the Missouri Bushwhackers. Belle, aged fifteen, the little rich girl of the town of Carthage, became overnight as fiery a patriot of the Confederacy as that other Southern Belle, Miss Boyd, of whom our grandparents were for a space sentimentally informed. She saw her beloved brother ride away to become a captain under Quantrell, cheered shrilly at the strains of "Maryland, My Maryland" and privately made plans to harry the Yankees. With superb effrontery she effected almost daily communication with her bushwhacking brother

to the extreme indignation of Major Enos, a fellow townsman loyally inclined, who commanded a troop of Federal horse stationed in Newtonia, Missouri, and by virtue of a body like Diana's and a face as delicate and vivid as a poppy, she so laid a spell on the silly, good-natured men in blue that they never interfered with her riding. Captain Edward Shirley throve mightily on Federal defeats, Belle scouted in peace, and Major Enos sizzled with annoyance. But he had his moments. On her sixteenth birthday he caught Belle leisurely examining the disposition of his forces at Newtonia, heard that Edward was in Carthage visiting his family, and so put the sister under guard at the house of Judge Richery, his headquarters, and dispatched troopers to seize the brother. Belle, under arrest, pulled Major Enos' ears, cursed him with surprising brilliance, played Rebel airs upon the piano and interrupted herself to curse again. Not for nothing did she ride with Quantrell. When his men were far enough upon the road to Carthage to make Belle's arrival there before them a seeming impossibility, Major Enos wiped tears of laughter from his eyes and set her free. "Well, Myra, you can go now. But I'm afraid you won't see Ed when you get home." Gaining her horse, Belle passed like flame from his vision. She had made no reasonable reply but Major Enos was still laughing when an orderly informed him that Miss Shirley was

going across country as though all hell were at her heels. Major Enos, observing this phenomenon with field glasses from a second story window, whistled through his teeth. "Well, I'll be damned. A born guerilla. If she don't lick my boys I'm no soldier." Belle met his boys in Carthage, curtsied to their leader as he rode up to her father's house and saved the Major's reputation. "Looking for Captain Shirley? What a shame. Why, he's gone long ago. Yes, indeed, he had business up Spring River."

The news that Edward had been killed in action a few days later convinced Belle that Yankees were to a man assassins. Even after Appomattox she clung to her detestation of them as she clung to her associations with her brother's command, the horsemen of Quantrell. In her twenty-first year she still rode in the company of men for whom Lee's capitulation bore but little significance, Cole Younger and the James boys, Jim Reed, son of a wealthy landowner of Rich Hill, Missouri, and other dashing irreconcilables, who found the piping times of peace tedious and without felicity. In 1866 Judge Shirley, aware perhaps that Missouri was declining more and more rapidly into an attitude grievously nationalistic, forsook Carthage for Sceyene, in Texas, where he acquired large holdings ten miles east of Dallas. Texans still abominated the government at Washington and Belle

found many admirers acceptable because of their politics. Without much doubt she reigned supreme over the young men of a large section of the Lone Star State when one day Jim Reed, former companion of her brother and member of the old Quantrell fellowship, rode into town, was directed to the Shirley ranch, and found a stirring welcome. Judge Shirley brought out the mellowest Bourbon and the longest cigars, Belle sparkled with a wit no less keen than in the great days of '64 and shone with a far more valiant beauty. The men talked of the war, how it might have been won, of the gallantry of Edward Shirley and the iniquities of the men who had killed him while Reed looked on Belle with unsubtle admiration and candid desire. Reed had come into Texas accompanied by others of Quantrell's late squadrons and when, a few days later, the love-lorn veteran sued for the Pride of the Countryside, these bold fellows were warned that theirs would be the groomsmen's duties. Judge Shirley, however, had other plans for Belle. He laughed genially at Reed's request, forced whisky on him and lit his cigar. "Pshaw, Jim, Myra's too young spite of all her carryin' on. Call again, son, a couple of years from now." Reed grinned with difficulty and the Bourbon had lost its savor. He grew cheered to think that Belle, however, seldom agreed with her father and indeed it was she who suggested an

elopement, a Lochinvar-like dash across the border, squired by twenty fellows, fine riders all, and at a pinch most deadly marksmen. The twenty were groomsmen after all while Belle and Reed, on horseback, were married and wished well by all present. Judge Shirley, hot and scandalously profane, was ten miles away in a bouncing buckboard, lashing two staunch but outclassed bays and gripping a shotgun with a sweating forearm, so that his felicitations were not received. The judge, however, was too seasoned a man of his world to play the stern and unforgiving parent. He called the fugitives home, treated Reed "en bon garçon" and prevailed upon Belle to go to school and, surprisingly, she did—for six months. Her husband, returning to Missouri on business, sent after a time for his bride, to find that he had grievously underestimated his father-in-law. Judge Shirley kept Belle at school and held onto her with the grip of iron. The thought that she was another man's wife seemed never to have occurred to him and the equestrian ceremony he treated often and with exquisite tactlessness as a rare jest and nothing more. Reed fumed and pondered, wifeless and lonely, and finally planned a genuine Lochinvar quest. Arriving secretly in Sceyene he caught Belle as she dropped from her bedroom window and the two made off like wraiths into the darkness, with only one mishap. Reed's horse, neigh-

ing, awoke a little tempest of whinnying questions from the Shirley stock and as the lovers took to the road the wily judge and a half dozen retainers were scarce a mile behind them. The pursuers came shooting, a bluff which the Reeds called without hesitation, and stayed not to question. Though carrying double, the romanticists' mount outran those of the materialists and in time Reed brought his bride home to the parental roof at Rich Hill, Missouri, whole and victorious.

After this tumultuous honeymoon, life went gayly and without word from Texas. In September, 1869, Belle bore her husband a daughter, a baby which grew up to be a beauty though named Pearl, a name greatly fancied by Belle, and deplored by Judge Shirley who in later years was wont to refer to his grandchild as Rosie. The judge's taste in jewels ran to less gentle display. But shortly after the christening the first indications of what Belle's future was to be, appeared in a sky hitherto unclouded by aught save her father's unwarranted pigheadedness. Scott Reed, her brother-in-law, like Jim, nourished on warfare and violence, had the misfortune to be shot to death by three questionable characters known as the Shannon boys, whose field of operations was the Indian Territory closely adjacent to Fort Smith in Arkansas. Scott, it is believed, was made away with because he was mistaken for a desperado named Fisher,

but to Jim Reed, this circumstance, while unfortunate, could not affect his course of action towards his brother's assassins. The pleasantly thrilling legend runs that Jim took his wife and baby daughter down to an oak tree beneath the noble shade of which rippled the placid waters of a creek, and there, his features contracting with agony, charged her somberly to meet him at that trysting place that day and hour three weeks hence. Then, we are told, he disappeared. What he probably did was to saddle his horse and ride west with far less ceremony. How and where he met and warred with the Shannons we do not know but he returned to Rich Hill with a price on his head and three notches on his gun. Belle and baby Pearl were picked up, one might say, on the run, and the Reeds reached Los Angeles in California three jumps ahead of an Arkansas sheriff whose methods and manners were those of that estimable officer, Mr. Hickok. Hide-and-seek on the Coast in 1871 was a hot business, Jim Reed was plainly worried and Belle was again pregnant. She bore a boy, christened Edward after her brother, and, barely recovered, parted with Jim, who made a dash for Texas, preferring an irate father-in-law to an existence outside it. He found Judge Shirley wonderfully reconciled and so bought land near Dallas and called Belle home. Hopefully, she came, bringing Pearl, who completed the cementation

of the family feud, but the Shannon affray had forever destroyed Reed's career as a law-abiding citizen. With a price upon his head, he was forced to come and go by devious paths and to count every man's hand against him. He fell in with Tom Starr, member of a great sept in the Cherokee nation, an Indian who in his time had wrung a special treaty from the Cherokee government, so confirmed were his violent policies and malpractices. Reed found a refuge with him, lived much of his time at his cabin near Fort Smith and not seldom sent for Belle to come to him. She did so always, leaving Pearl with her grandparents, and during these clandestine travels, met Tom Starr's son Sam, a vigorous young man destined to complicate her later days. For four years Reed evaded reward-hunters and the Arkansas authorities, but his luck, as he himself recognized, might not hold forever. He was at his home near Dallas in the summer of 1875 and rode away in the company of one John Morris, a scout, in whom, for some obscure reason, the outlaw placed confidence. Belle and his daughter never again saw him alive. The two men stopped for lunch in McKinney, the county seat of Collin County, and left their Winchesters in their saddle scabbards in deference to the western code. While Reed ate, Morris left the table on a pretext and, of course, returned armed. Reed saw him in the doorway in the fraction of time

immediately before the rifle exploded, and threw himself backwards, lifting the table by its edges as a shield before his body. The heavy bullets tore through the wood as through cardboard, but even so Reed had drawn his pistol when the man of the house, at Morris's yell, "It's Reed, the murderer," knocked up the Colt and completed the slaughter. Reed had yelled once, "Traitor!" but the blood was in his throat and he was dead a minute and a half after Morris's treachery.

Belle heard the news dry-eyed. Five years of outlawry had schooled her emotions but she swore that the Judas would never touch the reward. She rode calmly into Collin County and dispassionately viewed the patched and bandaged body of her husband. "That's not Jim Reed. 'Pears to me, gentlemen, as if you'd shot the wrong man. I'm right sorry, Mr. Morris, but you'll have to shoot Jim if you want the reward Jim's worth." Stricken to stone, Morris watched her ride away. A widow's denial of her husband's identity invalidated offers of rewards in times when most small communities boasted an average of one man shot each day.

Belle, widowed, moved to Dallas where she kept a large house hospitably open to a multitude of friends and a racing stable deemed the best in a wide locality. She waited in vain for the youngest Reed to avenge his brother's death and as time went on and Morris re-

mained above ground she commenced to entertain a noticeably bitter contempt for society. She pursued her three great enthusiasms, books, music and horses, educated Pearl and by way of self-expression, burnt down a grocery store and ignored the proceedings that resulted. This crime might have been discounted by the court as the eccentric whim of a rich and very pretty girl, but Belle would not have it so. Her attitude of disdain so incensed the bench that she had found the going rough had not a wealthy stockman named Patterson paid the large fine imposed and offered her the remainder of his fortune as well. Belle refused him, doubtless to his eventual relief, and threw herself suddenly without reserve into a career of reckless and unscrupulous diversion. She divided her time between the Indian Territory and the Starrs and her racing stud at Dallas. Arrested on the charge of horse stealing, a serious one in Texas in the late 'seventies, she beguiled her jailer into eloping with her and returned him shortly afterwards to his family with a card sewed into his coat which the unfortunate fellow failed to discover until too late. It bore the words "Found to be unsatisfactory on using." She assumed a modishly cut riding habit on all occasions, strapped a pistol and cartridges about her waist, and gathered about her a band of frivolous-minded and very hard young men who did whatever

she commanded of them and probably suggested quite a number of more or less illegal pastimes. It is of this point in her career that Signor Lombroso deals with such enthusiastic care. He states joyfully that she shot men in cold blood, horsewhipped a judge who in her hearing threatened her with prosecution, kept a whole posse of lovers and so terrified the state of Texas that the governor was forced to call out the troops to quell her. The great Italian deals, unintentionally, a little loosely with the facts but there is no doubt that in 1877 Belle was determinedly and garishly upon the warpath. Among her spurred and booted squires rode such notorious if personable ruffians as Jack Spaniard, Jim French and "Blue Duck," a young man whose diverting alias appears in the records of a number of fatal affrays. Belle, one of whose rigid standards of masculine excellence was flawless courage, bestowed her favors on one after another of these bravi, demoting whichever failed in a crucial test. "Blue Duck," a handsome fellow, reigned the longest but was haled away to prison in the end after Belle, by dint of large expenditure, had saved his neck from George Maledon, the hangman at Fort Smith.

Touching this same "Blue Duck" there exists an interesting fragment not without factual significance regarding Belle's courageous temper. Her young friend borrowed 2,000 dollars from her and, requesting a

week's leave of absence, left her band in the Indian territory between Kansas and Texas, and rode into Fort Dodge to try his luck at the many and various games of chance to be found in that evil little town. Fort Dodge, at the western terminus of the Santa Fé, was the shipping point for the longhorns driven in from the west and southwest plains, and gold was therefore as plentiful therein as infractions of the Ten Commandments. Gunplay was an hourly and unregarded occurrence and a man's life worth between ten and twenty dollars, depending on his color, whether brown or white. "Blue Duck" played in poor luck from the first and even failed to beat his man to the draw so that he carried back to his mistress not only his empty pockets but a perforated pistol arm. Too wise to lie to Belle, he told his story straight. Her remarks, not frugal and wonderfully sulphuric, he accepted in silence but wondered when she in her turn rode away. She arrived in Fort Dodge and went at once to the point. Entering the gambling hall patronized by her errant friend, she beat the dealer and the attendant players to the draw, collected 7,000 dollars in gold stakes and thanked the gentlemen one and all, asking that they come down into the Territory to collect the change. Departing hastily but with dignity, not one of the slugs that followed her through the shuttered windows of the second story

of the den, achieved their mark, and there is no reason to believe that the change due to the ravished lay-out was ever collected.

Yet another example of her sprightly though somewhat questionable sense of humor one finds in the account of a bank robbery in Texas in which 30,000 dollars were stolen away and the reputation of a solid citizen badly damaged. Weary of the more arduous methods of acquiring a fortune, Belle decided in 1878 to try her hand at a deception which her exceeding comeliness still rendered thoroughly possible. She left her band in the Territory, took up her residence in a large and thriving Texan city and in two months' time had become a well-known and popular figure particularly sought after by the cashier of the community's principal bank. When she deemed his confidence sufficiently captured, Belle strolled into the bank one day at lunch time to find her swain alone for the nonce. The two engaged in pleasant speech, Belle flattering the simple fellow in a manner that softened his middle-aged heart to the consistency of jelly and filled his mind with rosy and ridiculous dreams. Throwing back his head to laugh at some tender jest he found beneath it when once more he dropped his chin, a certain length of chilly metal that shocked his being to its quivering marrow. Belle's eyes still held their soft gayety but her voice was a repellent

monotone. "Don't yell, now, Honey, don't yell. Just tuck the bills in that safe beside you into this little bag, and look right smart about it." Quivering, the outraged gallant did as he was told. "Thank you, Honey. If you're ever in the Territory come around for a visit. Adios." Backing leisurely out of his presence as though he were royalty, she was beheld by the agonized cashier a minute later passing at a gallop from his life. And with her, as was estimated, passed also 30,000 dollars.

Exploits of this variety made Belle in a year's time the sensation of the Southwest and the particular pride of newspaper editors with a flair for the smashing scarehead and clamorous headline. Every week there shouted in the contemporary journals descriptions of this or that outrage; how she had robbed this or that citizen, shot this or that marshal, fought and won this or that pitched battle with the rangers. Her name became a byword from Fort Smith to Galveston and her infamy reached the legendary proportions of an historic myth. When in 1880 she quitted Texas forever and married Sam Starr of the Cherokee nation, she was a figure far more considerable in the popular imagination of the West than Benedict Arnold or Ulysses S. Grant. In Nebraska where she shone darkly from 1878 to 1880 she was frequently confounded with her who is mentioned in the 17th chapter of Revelation. With the

wealthy and respected Shirleys of Sceyene, Texas, late of Carthage, Missouri, she had destroyed her last tie and obscurest connection.

The last nine years of her life differed in no wise in their tenor from the preceding five. As a citizeness of the Cherokee nation she was entitled to a claim of land within its limits and she did not hesitate to secure it, choosing a wild tract on the Canadian River in the southwest section of the nation. There she built a large fort-like home, easily defended and difficult to approach, a house that shortly became the rendezvous of every adventuring horseman in the Territory. Belle's own taste in interior decoration made of it more than a spacious cabin. In the great living-room, hung with antlers and spread with bear skins, were many books and a grand piano secured at great expense from Fort Smith. Her daughter Pearl, better known as the Lily of the Canadian, kept house and practiced assiduously at her music, utterly oblivious to the alien faces and the atmosphere of secrecy that pervaded her mother's home. Named "Younger's Bend," the place in its turn became a sort of legend. The prestige of her father-in-law, Tom Starr, and of his powerful clan, alone protected it from frequent and unsocial visits from the Arkansas authorities. Jesse James himself passed a few nights there, and a half-dozen or so horses were always in the corrals,

hard-ridden animals that belonged to the surreptitious gentry to be found in the living-room, cleaning rifles and filing pistol sights. Belle's band was never entirely dissolved. Depredations up and down the Territory continued and the outraged inhabitants preferred to see in them the hand of the "Queen of the Desperados."

Belle was accustomed once a year to travel eastward to Chicago and sometimes to New York, from which sojourns she always returned with boxes of books and music, and clothes quite unfitted for Younger's Bend, frilly and modish things which, somewhat pathetically, she loved to touch and gaze upon but which were always packed away and never worn. These vacations from what she euphoniously termed "scouting" marked a cessation in the troubles of the country, but when she returned the complaints to town marshals and sheriffs invariably became once again prodigal and frantic. Finally Judge Parker, the Rhadamanthus of Fort Smith, remembered as the West's most famous hanging judge, sentenced her to one year in a house of correction at Detroit, a ridiculous sentence considering the markable stature of her crimes, and the more so because in the case for which she was convicted she was innocent. Larceny, the theft of a colt which neither she nor her husband, also convicted, ever saw, and a sentence of one year with an opportunity for release after nine months

for good behavior, must have stirred the sense of humor of a woman who had terrorized a generous section of the Southwest for eight years. She and the impassive Sam Starr went east in February 1883, after Belle had written to her daughter, resident with a friend, "Mamma Mac," in Kansas, a letter which makes clear to the reader the reason for the respect still shown her memory in the West.

"Miss Pearl Younger,

"Oswego,

"Kansas.

"(My Baby)

"My Dear Little One:—It is useless to attempt to conceal my trouble from you and though you are nothing but a child I have confidence that my darling will hear with fortitude what I now write.

"I shall be away from you a few months, baby, and have only this consolation to offer you, that never again will I be placed in such humiliating circumstances and that in the future your little tender heart shall never more ache, or a blush be called to your cheek on your mother's account. Sam and I were tried here and sentenced to nine months in the house of correction, Detroit, Michigan, for which place we start in the morning. Now, Pearl, there is a vast difference between

that place and a penitentiary; you must bear that in mind, and not think of mamma being shut up in a gloomy prison. It is said to be one of the finest institutions in the United States, surrounded by beautiful grounds, with fountains and everything nice. There I can have my education renewed, and I stand sadly in need of it. Sam will have to attend school and I think it the best thing ever happened for him, and now you must not be unhappy and brood over our absence. It won't take the time long to glide by and as we come home we will get you and then we will have such a nice time.

"We will get your horse up and I will break him and you can ride John while I am gentling Loco. We will have Eddie with us and will be as happy as the birds we claim at home. Now, baby, you can either stay with grandma or your Mamma Mac, just as you like, and do the best you can until I come back, which won't be long. Tell Eddie that he can go home with us and have a good time hunting and though I wish not to deprive Marion and ma of him for any length of time yet I must keep him a while. Love to ma and Marion. [Her son Edward was brought up by the Reeds at Rich Hill, Mo.]

"Uncle Tom has stood by me nobly in our trouble, done everything that one could do. Now, baby, I will write to you often. You must write to your grandma but

don't tell her of this; and to your Aunt Ellen, Mamma Mac, but to no one else. Remember; I don't care who writes to you, you must not answer. I say this because I do not want you to correspond with any one in the Indian Territory, my baby, my sweet little one, and you must mind me. Except Auntie; if you wish to hear from me Auntie will let you know. If you write me, ma would find out where I am, and, Pearl, you must never let her know. Her head is overburdened with care now and therefore you must keep this carefully guarded from her.

"Destroy this letter as soon as read. As I told you before, if you wish to stay awhile with your Mamma Mac, I am willing. But you must devote your time to your studies. Bye bye, sweet baby mine—

"Belle Starr."

It would be hard to deny to one who could write such a letter as this, all the virtues and none of the vices of humanity. Belle returned from Detroit, where she had made of the warden of her period of detention a fast friend and stubborn apologist, determined never again to run foul of the law, but she had one score to settle. At her trial in February District-Attorney Clayton had directed a few legal jibes at her husband's illiteracy and Belle had been bitterly affronted. At a rodeo

held at the Sebastian County Fair grounds she was asked to give an exhibition of a coach robbery, which she did, using blank cartridges. She tried hard to persuade Clayton to ride in the coach and afterwards told him that if he had, she had meant to kill him, offering as an explanation, that her pistol must by mistake have carried one charged shell. Fortunately, Clayton refused and Belle's return to Younger's Bend was peaceful and unfraught with bloodshed. But her days did not long remain pacific. Her string, as she herself once said, was running out. She was implicated in the disappearance of a badly wanted murderer named Middleton in 1885, but was cleared. In 1886 she aroused comment by aiding to defend her quondam friend "Blue Duck" from the gallows and the following year Sam Starr was shot to death in a pistol duel at Whitefield while the fiddles sawed and the inhabitants danced at the fiesta he had ridden miles to attend. The occasion of the affray was a wordy and alcoholic dispute between Frank West, a deputy sheriff, who had shot Starr's horse while the latter was making a praiseworthy attempt to resist arrest, and Belle's husband, at the time released on bail. Both Belle and Starr attended the dance given by the Surratts at Whitefield and at midnight left the house and walked past a bonfire blazing in the yard. Encountering West, Belle stepped from in front of her husband, dis-

closing the latter with his pistol drawn. In less than thirty seconds West was fatally injured by a bullet through his throat but, falling, he managed to disengage his weapon and to shoot four times. Starr's light, as Belle mournfully observed, went out right there. A neighbor rode to inform the child Pearl, whose knowledge of the border idiom seems to have been so slight as to make the terrible tidings almost unintelligible to her. The honest fellow who bore the news gazed somberly at her lovely if somewhat vacant countenance and murmured, "Miss Pearl, honey, your uncle Sam's dropped from under the hat." Shaking his head mournfully, he added, "Looked kinda smoky 'round the edges all through the shivarree but who'd figure Sam would come a shootin' thataway." When her widowed mother returned she found Pearl mildly curious but utterly calm.

Belle ruled the South Canadian but three years more. Her dominion over the hard characters of her wild vicinity while marked by justice was rendered tumultuous by her arrogant and violent temper, and in the end this compassed her death, though it is noteworthy that the desperado who killed her dared not meet her face to face. Edgar Watson, wanted in Florida for murder, wished to lease a portion of her land, but Belle chose another tenant whose character was less displeasing to her. In revenge Watson prevailed upon this man to

break his contract by observing that he would be intolerably disturbed by the visits of the Federal authorities to his landlady. Belle thereupon publicly "called" Watson and remarked in valediction that though the Federal authorities might not want him the Florida authorities did. Watson, unaware that his wife had imparted his record to Belle, beheld his secret his no longer and extradition leering at his elbow. He said nothing at the time but as is the case with all cowards, fear made of him a more dangerous individual than any gunman in the Territory.

On February 3rd, 1889, on her forty-third birthday, Belle accompanied her brother-in-law, Jim Starr, 29 miles on his way to Fort Smith, turning homeward at San Bois in the Choctaw nation. Two miles from Younger's Bend she halted for a few minutes at the house of one Jack Rose, chatted a while, ignored Watson who was lounging in the yard, and rode on. Watson, it was observed, left at once for his cabin which stood 150 yards away. Yet another 150 yards beyond the Watson cabin Belle may have caught a second's glimpse of her enemy, but as she rode by the fenced field in which he stood, the significance of his position must have escaped her. He shot her in the back as she passed, the 12-gauge shotgun loaded with turkey-shot bellowing at its mark within a distance of twenty feet. As she

lay in the muddy roadway he climbed the fence and shot her twice again, this time in her face, as dying, she seems to have possessed less terror for him.

One Milo Hoyt heard her horse galloping riderless down the road and later came upon her body.

She was buried in the front yard of the fort at Younger's Bend and above her head stands a granite tablet carved with the likeness of her favorite horse and her brand, in the upper right hand corner a star, in the lower left a bell. A clasped hand holding flowers surmounts a single quatrain, and a brief inscription:

BELLE STARR
Born in Carthage, Mo.
Feb. 3, 1846
Died
Feb. 3, 1889

Shed not for me the bitter tear,
Nor give the heart to vain regret,
'Tis but the casket that lies here—
The gem that filled it sparkles yet.

In the last analysis it may be seen that Signor Lombroso was in error touching his estimate of her character and villainies. The iniquity of these has something dwindled with the years, while the memory of her courage

and her loyalty to friends still holds its tenure in the country of her stormy residence.

Sad to relate, Watson was never hanged at Fort Smith. Acquitted, inexplicably enough, he died in a gun-fight in Arkansas, a convict resisting arrest. The destinies of Jim Reed's seed, Belle's children, Pearl and Edward, were hardly more happy. Pearl, after many vicissitudes, survived them to live unfelicitously in Fort Smith. Edward passed in the acrid reek of a fanned forty-five in a saloon in 1896. It was against them that Belle perhaps sinned most of all. But then when she ran away from Sceyene with Jim Reed in her free and glorious twenties she possessed no knowledge of, and less anxiety for, the influences of heredity.

HER FROLIC GRACE OF KINGSTON

HER FROLIC GRACE OF KINGSTON

Byron, had he known her, would have devoted certainly not less than three stanzas of "Don Juan" to her indisputable talents and preposterous career. Walpole, a dull rhymester, lacked the ability to do them justice save in his genteelly toxic correspondence and Selwyn, the wit, failed again and again to etch in couplets a personality developed to be the joy of greater satirists. But Byron would have given her to us all complete, lodged, perhaps, in a whole canto, a woman taken in adultery and stoned therefor, but a woman so determined, courageous and agile, that she dodged all the missiles destined to crush her, so that they ricocheted from walls of ballrooms and boudoirs to destroy their throwers. Her frolic Grace of Kingston, the peerless, the incomparable Chudleigh! Even in age she persisted in dominion, for a cautious gentleman much seen at court averred that he dared not speak to her since, like certain wines, she had become so mellowed and strengthened with the years, that he feared his head might no longer stand her.

Yet the grapes that went to create her sprang from a very moderate vineyard. She was born in 1720 in London, into a sound county family, quite unemblazoned however, and not wealthy, so that when her father, Colonel Thomas Chudleigh, died when she was six years old, he left her to the care of a mother who possessed more wit than wisdom and a sense of expediency greater than either. Mrs. Chudleigh, forced by the death of her military consort to live in reduced circumstances, for an officer's pension was all her legacy, beheld the high hopes that she had entertained for the diminutive Elizabeth's future, dissolve and fade away towards a horizon murky with poverty. For a time after her Colonel's death she was content to watch this tragic dissolution proceed unchecked, but as her daughter grew a little older she perceived that Elizabeth was destined to be very beautiful, too beautiful to live outside of London, a county belle, the siren of some shire where society was seldom à la mode and brilliant marriages were rare. Seeking in her mind for a way and a means to keep her infant daughter in the city and to place her in a more glittering setting, Mrs. Chudleigh bethought herself of the connections of the house of Chudleigh, resident in town and occasionally to be seen at Court, for her husband's family stood in good repute among the landed gentry of England. It struck Mrs. Chudleigh that to ignore those

who might, if properly approached, extend to her a helping hand were folly if not actually wicked, especially if one possessed so attractive a pawn as Elizabeth to advance upon the board of fashionable society. Consequently the good lady forsook her husband's residence, now too dear to maintain, procured at a reasonable rental a small house not far distant from Bloomsbury, and engaged to live therein with her daughter and a lodger who would add somewhat to her resources without subtraction from her position. All this worked famously, and as she made a very handsome widow her drawing rooms were frequently filled with polite society who played with her at Ombre or at Loo, drank her excellent coffee and gossiped with poisonous delicacy about everything from Mr. Pope's Twickenam villa to the animadversions of Doctor Swift. And in the meantime Elizabeth emerged from childhood and embarked upon her teens schooled in scandal and a repartee as skillful as smallsword play.

One day when her tall daughter was little past seventeen, Mrs. Chudleigh was thrilled to observe from her windows a splendidly appointed gentleman picking his way down the street towards her front door, unjostled by chairmen and porters who yielded him the wall with unwonted respect and seemed quite content to run the risk themselves of receiving upon their own heads the

slops that in an unsanitary age were accustomed to fly through second story windows. As he drew nearer, the palpitating widow recognized the great Mr. Pulteney, the flaming meteor of His Majesty's opposition, better known in later years as the Earl of Bath. Mr. Pulteney, walking delicately, achieved her door and made his presence known, the while within, Mrs. Chudleigh ran from dressing table to clothes cupboard and back again, calling upon her maid and her daughter and her cook to prepare for great things. Admitted by Mrs. Chudleigh's black boy turbaned in what once had been a part of one of Mrs. Chudleigh's dresses, Mr. Pulteney, all unmindful of the riot his call was causing over his head, sat him down in the drawing room, tapped a thumb's load of rappee into a well-cut nostril, hummed a tune from a light opera of Mr. Gay's and remained quite unwarned of what was in store for him. But not for long. Anon came his hostess rustling in India silks, hair powdered and face fashionably patched, to inquire how he did and ask that he say a kind word to her darling Elizabeth, a slip of a girl who panted for his good opinion. Mr. Pulteney, mildly flattered, a little bored, proclaimed himself ravished at the opportunity, then sat with mouth and eyes agape, a man stunned, as the slip of a girl made her appearance.

Elizabeth in her eighteenth year was the most beauti-

ful woman then in England; of that Mr. Pulteney, who was much at Leicester House in the company of his royal friend, the Prince of Wales, was quite positive. Tall and nobly proportioned, she stood in the doorway a little timidly, while the color came and went beneath a skin as white as milk, and a questioning glance made her large clear eyes only the more darkly blue. Presented to Mr. Pulteney she curtsied with so flawless a grace and so low that that distinguished statesman beheld a cluster of tiny curls upon a neck so admirably formed and so deliciously white, that he afterwards affirmed with polite oaths that Praxiteles from the finest Parian marble could not have cut its fellow. Mr. Pulteney was her victim on the spot. When, after a few words and another curtsey she modestly withdrew, and Mr. Pulteney had kissed her hand, and finding the experience so pleasing had performed the same office for her wrist, she had made her first conquest and one that was destined to win for her the world. Quitting Mrs. Chudleigh's drawing room, his future Lordship of Bath seemed to his delighted hostess to be in a revery. "By Gad, Ma'm, your girl's a goddess." It was no idle compliment.

The next five years consisted for Elizabeth in a continual round of introductions to noblemen and noblewomen well-known and influential at Court, the agent for these being the enraptured Mr. Pulteney, and the

object a position intimately connected with the household of their Hanoverian Majesties. In 1743 her most devoted admirer, now Earl of Bath, achieved his goal and Miss Elizabeth Chudleigh was appointed maid of honor to Augusta, Princess of Wales. In Bloomsbury her mother swooned with joy, at Court my Lord of Bath pranced with satisfaction, and at Strawberry Hill the wicked, audacious Mr. Horace Walpole filled an inkwell and snickered gently as he prepared to use it. The beautiful Elizabeth was hard upon the highroad to Fortune.

It was not long, only a month or two, before she came upon the first milestone, and it had been in the end far more fortunate for her had she never gone beyond it. James, the sixth Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, whose grandfather had died even as Thackeray describes in "Henry Esmond," in a duel with the wicked Lord Mohun, fell at once beneath the spell of the incomparable Chudleigh. It may be noted here that Elizabeth furnished Thackeray with the material with which he created Beatrix Esmond, though he places this character chronologically a generation ahead of her prototype. James, the sixth Duke, was however no less gallant a nobleman than his grandfather, and his eye for beauty is attested to by the fact that he eventually made another very beautiful Elizabeth his duchess, Elizabeth Gunning, a famous belle of a family of belles, who after-

wards became the Duchess of Argyle. He was, however, when he fell deeply in love with our maid of honor, but just twenty and his guardians intended him for the Grand Tour, that he might return to England his wild oats thoroughly sown and his mind, at least, improved. Before the youth set out he and Elizabeth pledged their troths one to another, and considered themselves soundly if secretly engaged. Both were young and optimistic, and after all the Grand Tour might be completed with dispatch did one not linger unduly in Paris or in Rome. It seemed to Elizabeth that her position as one of the greatest ladies in England was assured and only for a little time deferred. With this milestone reached she would seek to go no further, but her destiny had other cards to play.

No sooner was his young Grace of Hamilton at sea than Miss Chudleigh received from her Aunt, one Lady Hanmer, an invitation to visit her at Lainston, near Winchester. Going thither she found another guest had been bidden, a young man named Augustus Hervey, a cadet of the house of Bristol and a lieutenant on the man-of-war *Cornwall,* at that time lying at Portsmouth preparing to sail to the West Indies. It very soon became apparent to Miss Chudleigh that Mr. Hervey stood high in the favor of her Aunt, and that that lady intended to match him with her niece by any means in her power.

Miss Chudleigh, however, eagerly awaiting a post from her touring lover, looked on Mr. Hervey with no esteem, and obstinately refused to sing for him, dance with him or walk with him. Mystified and annoyed, Lady Hanmer sought for explanations in vain, but the Dover dispatches from the Continent yielded her a clew. In spite of the ducal coronet that sealed these missives addressed to her niece, the unscrupulous lady secreted them about her person and never gave them up. As the weeks passed and no love letters came to cheer her, Miss Chudleigh became first anxious, then wondering, then piqued. Her duke then was false to her, doubtless laughed at her credulity and simple faith, the while disporting himself with those lacy licentious minions that M. Watteau so tastefully portrayed embarking for Cythera. The thought was not to be borne. With color high in her cheeks and her eyes as bright as mint-new guineas, she surprised the mournful Mr. Hervey by suggesting a walk in the orchards, and set out with him bent on opening his eyes to what a maid of honor could do when she chose. "There were greengages ripe which the lady and gentleman were both very fond of," was part of the testimony of a witness thirty-two years later at her trial. Perhaps this mutual passion for plums finally determined Elizabeth that, though a commoner, Lieutenant Hervey was a man of sounder sense than her

errant Duke, for she all at once accepted his proposal of marriage and with her aunt crying Hosannah, was secretly married to him in the family chapel at Lainston by the Reverend Mr. Merrill, parson of this parish. A month or two passed in a sort of dreary honeymoon, during which time Mrs. Hervey grew to loathe Lieutenant Hervey, and Lieutenant Hervey to wish himself in the farthest west of the West Indies, for though she was surpassingly lovely, his wife's taste for him, disappearing, left her something wanting in sweetness. And then to complete the domestic tragedy home came His Grace of Hamilton raging with impatience to embrace his bride-to-be, and with astonishment that he had had no word from her during his absence. The ensuing explanations proved actively unpleasant for Lady Hanmer, whose person her niece, as lithe and strenuous as Diana, seemed determined to destroy. The young duke, puzzled that after his devotion to her had been made clear, he was not at once restored to favor, was near out of his wits. Hervey was confounded, and the beautiful Elizabeth on the verge of insanity.

After troublous days the situation somewhat resolved itself by Hervey taking his leave and sailing on board his ship, his marriage still a secret to the world, for disclosed, it would cause his wife to forfeit her position at Court; Elizabeth returning to her duties, and the Duke

of Hamilton, not to speak of other noble lords, retiring from their attendance upon her, mystified and not a little angry. Lady Hanmer, keeping herself close at Lainston, passes out of the story. Once more at Court Elizabeth continued to break hearts, but her extraordinary and unwarrantable coldness to their possessors soon became a topic of conversation that eventually reached the ears of her mother. That good lady clamored at once for the reason for this unnatural frigidity, and being tersely given a good one was for a time dashed in despair. Rallying after a last interview with her husband she packed her daughter off to the Continent, and prayed devoutly that a great wind might sweep her son-in-law's vessel, soon afterwards to sail, under the sea, since although he was grandson to the second Earl of Bristol, there was little hope of his succeeding to that title. In the meantime the ravishing Miss Chudleigh was in Berlin, parrying the vigorous amorous advances of the Great Frederick, receiving the admiration and sisterly love of the Electress of Saxony, and enslaving a great number of noble Prussian bachelors. She returned to England in 1746 after eight months abroad, at six and twenty, to find her husband now Captain Hervey, home from the sea, his grandfather the noble lord very ill indeed, and herself about to present her naval consort with an heir. Born in Chelsea, the child lived only a few days,

and was buried in the Old Church, leaving the Herveys in as unsolid a domestic relationship as before.

Her training at Court, however, had taught Elizabeth that ladies who bore titles came by more benefits than sisters quite as virtuous who were plain Misses or Madams. The fact that my old Lord of Bristol lay near to death and a singular combination of circumstances had removed in the space of two years all heirs to his title that had stood between it and her Augustus, bred in her mind a determination to keep her marriage a secret no longer, but to obtain concrete proof of it lest her husband deny it on accession to the peerage. To a young woman of her adventurous and energetic character the fact that at her marriage no register had been signed, and that the memory of the ceremony remained with five people only, herself and her husband, Lady Hanmer, her maid, Ann Cradock, and the Reverend Merrill, proved no obstacle at all. Off she drove to Lainston, concocted a sort of counterfeit marriage register in which she made one earlier entry, and then that one relating to her own marriage, gained access to the chapel and there deposited it, cozening the aged and failing Mr. Merrill so that apparently he never knew what was transpiring. She then returned merrily to London to await the passing of Lord Bristol. And then fortune forsook her. The old peer recovered of his illness, and Her-

vey seemed as far away as ever from his title. This proved too much for Elizabeth's tried patience. Bitterly lamenting her handiwork at Lainston, she quit her husband, returned to Court and determined to make the best match that she could, denying if need be, all connection with that somewhat pathetic officer, her husband.

From this period in her career until the day of her marriage with the Duke of Kingston, the beautiful maid of honor furnished the Court and polite society with every manner of gossip, friendly and malign. Mr. Horace Walpole, that indefatigable letter-writer, dealt with her faithfully at least thrice or four times a year. Famous for her determination and man-like courage, he had as early as 1745 written of her to Sir Horace Mann that the Prince of Wales would have preferred her to Pitt as Secretary for War. The violent penchant of His Highness for his wife's maid of honor was for a time the sensation of the day, not to speak of the fondness of his royal father, George II, for the same object. Walpole, writing in 1749, speaks of a Jubilee masquerade given for Elizabeth at the King's command—"Miss Chudleigh, the maid of honor, with whom our gracious monarch has a mind to believe himself in love, so much in love, that at one of the booths he gave her a fairing for her watch, which cost him five-and-thirty guineas, ac-

tually disbursed out of his privy purse, and not charged on the civil list"—a monstrous sum, thought Walpole. A year later, the housekeeper at Windsor dying, Elizabeth proposed her mother for the position and her request was instantly granted. Walpole observes: "The housekeeper at Windsor, an old monster that Verrio painted for one of the Furies, is dead. The revenue is large, and has been largely solicited. Two days ago, at the drawing-room, the gallant Orondates (George II) strode up to Miss Chudleigh, and told her he was glad to have an opportunity of obeying her commands, that he appointed her mother housekeeper at Windsor, and hoped she would not think a kiss too great a reward. Against all precedent he kissed her in the circle. He has had a hankering these two years. Her life, which is now of thirty years standing, has been a little historic. Why should not experience and a charming face on her side, and near seventy years on his, produce a title?" Walpole was not alone in this fashionable scandal-mongering, and while much of it was pure gossip Elizabeth never once modified her conduct or deportment to avoid its brewing. At the great masquerade at Ranelagh on April 20th, 1749, she electrified the brilliant company there assembled by appearing as Iphigenia in a costume that delighted the noblemen and outraged their wives. Few women were able to wear more daring costumes

than Miss Chudleigh, and she was quite honest in her belief that since God had made her beautiful it must be for men's enjoyment. The famous Mrs. Montagu, she whom Doctor Johnson was wont to call Queen of the Bluestockings, beheld her and fell into a fury. Writing to her sister ten days later, she disposed of her with acidity—"Miss Chudleigh's dress, or rather undress, was remarkable; she was Iphigenia for the sacrifice, but so naked the high-priest might easily inspect the entrails of the victim. The Maids of Honor (not of maids the strictest) were so offended they would not speak to her."—Walpole was less bitter, contenting himself by remarking that rather than Iphigenia, she more closely resembled Andromeda. All of this, coupled with the fact that she was extremely witty, utterly and fearlessly outspoken and devoted to such exercises as riding mettlesome horses, and shooting at a mark with pistols, was not long in creating for her a reputation that was at once the pride and scandal of society. True, she was occasionally scored upon by such notable wits as my Lord Chesterfield, with whom she was accustomed to play at whist, as on that occasion when she said to him: "Do you know, my lord, that the world says I have had twins?" "Does it indeed, Ma'am," had returned his lordship, casually examining her, "I make a point of believing only one-half of what it says." But Chesterfield's

was no mean wit to fall before. Court ladies who engaged blades with the incomparable Chudleigh seldom repeated the venture. Even her royal mistress, when disapproving of her maid's somewhat informal behavior with his Grace of Kingston, scolded with circumspection. Lord Bute, having received through his lady the immense fortune of her father, Wortley Montagu, husband of the famous Lady Mary, was considered at Court a prodigy of fortune, and Miss Chudleigh, who was also seeking to be one, was determined to become Duchess of Kingston. At his Royal Highness's rebuke she curtsied and replied: "Bien, Altesse, mais—chacun à son but."

In 1756 her mother, the good Mrs. Chudleigh who had seen her slip of a girl pass from Mr. Pulteney's tutelage in and out of numberless scandals of high society to remain finally still a maid of honor at thirty-six, died at Windsor, disappointed but still hopeful. Elizabeth was genuinely bereaved but the London wits admitted no such quality as sincerity. When she wept in a drawing-room to think of some neglect that she had shown her mother, while that lady lived, the scintillating George Selwyn wrought a quatrain upon it on the spot:

"What filial piety, what mournful grace,
For a lost parent, sits on Chudleigh's face!

Fair Virgin, weep no more, your anguish smother!
You in this town can never want a mother."

Elizabeth recovered her spirits but she felt the loss of an ally on whom she had hitherto always been able to rely. It was being borne in upon her that she had best be gathering rosebuds while yet she might, for there was no doubt that old time was still a-flying. She was nearly forty and though she was still very beautiful, forty is an age that encourages competitors. She had for some time been on terms of the greatest intimacy with Evelyn Pierrepont, nephew to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and Duke of Kingston, and, confident that he loved her deeply, she now determined to achieve the match. The one barrier in her path was the bugbear of the tiresome Augustus Hervey, who remained perpetually undrowned at sea and unennobled on land, for the old Lord Bristol seemed to live on forever. Communicating with this ridiculous husband of hers, she found him only too willing to be unmarried since, coming again to him somewhat late, love had indicated to him a perfect spouse in the comely person of an apothecary's daughter in Bath. The only question was how was one to be divorced from someone that everyone believed or pretended to believe unmarried. Some time passed while Elizabeth pondered and Augustus wooed his apothecary

maiden. Between ponderings she entertained their Majesties with two notable balls, and attached herself the more closely to the aging Kingston. These balls, as described by the ubiquitous Walpole, and the appearance at one of them of His Grace of Kingston, entertained the letter-writer's correspondents vastly. The first was "magnificent and well understood. No crowd, and though a sultry night, one was not a moment incommoded. The Court was illuminated on the whole summit of the wall with a battlement of lamps, smaller ones on every step, and a figure of lanterns on the outside of the house. The Virgin Mistress began the ball with the Duke of York, who was dressed in a pale blue watered tabby. Miss Chudleigh desired the gamblers would go into the garrets: 'Nay, they are not garrets, it is only the roof of the house hollowed for upper servants, but I have no upper servants.' Everybody ran up. There is a low gallery with bookcases, and four chambers practiced under the pent of the roof, each hung with the finest Indian pictures, on different colors; vases of flowers on each, for nosegays. The Lord of the festival (George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George III) was there, and seemed neither ashamed nor vain of the expenses of his pleasures. At supper she offered him Tokay, and told him she believed he would find it good. The supper was in two rooms, and very fine; and on all the

sideboards, and even on the chairs, were pyramids and troughs of strawberries and cherries."

The second of these famous entertainments was no less fine.

"A scaffold was erected in Hyde Park for fireworks; to show the illuminations without to more advantage, the company were received in an apartment totally dark, where they remained for two hours. The fireworks were fine, and succeeded well. On each side of the court were two large scaffolds for the Virgin's tradespeople. When the fireworks ceased a large scene was lighted in the court, representing their Majesties, on each side of which were six obelisks, painted with emblems and illuminated; mottoes beneath in Latin and English. The lady of the house made many apologies for the poorness of the performance, which she said was only oil-paper, painted by one of her servants (a characteristic frankness and lack of pretension similar to her avowal that she had no upper servants), but it really was fine and pretty. The Duke of Kingston was in a frock comme chez lui."

Things went thus until 1768 when it became immediately apparent to Elizabeth that not another moment must slip by without heralding the absolute dissolution of what remained of her marriage tie with Augustus. She was, good heavens, eight-and-forty and her Duke

near in his dotage. In a happy hour it was pointed out to her that she might institute a suit for jactitation of marriage, a very venerable and somewhat ridiculous proceeding which consisted in the petitioner complaining that someone else boasts that he is married to her. The someone else then maintaining that he is so married, must produce proofs, and if these are not forthcoming he must cease his boasting forever, and the petitioner is pronounced a spinster. To Elizabeth and Augustus this procedure offered precisely the opportunity that they sought for. Augustus boasted, claimed to have married her at a private house in Sparshot, a statement she easily disproved, and the easy-going judge of the Ecclesiastical Courts pronounced that she "was and now is a spinster free from all matrimonial contracts and espousals—more especially with the said Augustus John Hervey." A month later she became the Duchess of Kingston at St. George's Church in Hanover Square, and the King and Queen of England wore her favors.

Elizabeth had now reached, after more than twenty years of endeavor, the apex of her fortunes, and for the next five years she enjoyed them with great dignity and her ancient charm, but in 1773 they commenced once more to decline. The old Duke died leaving her a large fortune from sharing in which a nephew, a very dangerous man indeed, one Evelyn Medows, was entirely

excluded. After a memorable funeral at which Elizabeth wore, so Walpole informs us, a black veil that contained "1000 more yards than that of Mousseline La Sérieuse and at one of the inns where her grief bated, she was in too great an agony to descend at the door, and was slung into a bow-window, as Mark Antony was into Cleopatra's monument"—she returned home to Kingston House to find that Medows, a gentleman adventurer of something of her own stamp, was fighting to break His Grace's will. Elizabeth defeated this attempt and prepared to go on the Continent, confident that she held Medows checkmate, but she underestimated the talents of that toughened blade. While in Rome conversing daily with his Holiness Pope Clement XIV, a prelate distinguished for his intellect and saintly nature, news came to her that retribution had found her out at last, that Medows was preferring against her a criminal prosecution for bigamy. It must have struck her a dreadful but not an entirely unexpected blow. Such a character as hers was for all its vigor and intrepidity deeply superstitious, and all her life long the conviction had haunted her that one day the authenticity of her marriage to Hervey would be recognized and the fraudulent method of her ridding herself of him disclosed. Elizabeth was not so naïve as to sincerely credit the effect of that suit for jactitation of marriage. Marrying

Kingston, she was still conscious of the illegality of the whole performance. Drearily and wearily, for she was in her six-and-fiftieth year, she consigned her goods to the care of her friends in Rome, and prepared to return to England. Medows' course of action convinced her that the bill of indictment against her would be found, as indeed it was. The cunning rogue had somewhere encountered Lady Hanmer's maid, Ann Cradock, who on the day of those fateful nuptials, had stood guard outside the little chapel. Worked over by promises and coins she told Medows the whole story and offered to stand as witness for the prosecution. Elizabeth was informed that she must return at once or be outlawed forever from England. She went consequently to her banker, Mr. Jenkins, for funds to take her, only to find that he seemed desirous of avoiding her. After three visits it occurred to her that perhaps Mr. Jenkins desired to see her outlawed. Placing a brace of pistols in a portmanteau she called a fourth time, made sure that the banker was within, produced her pistols, and advised Mr. Jenkins' domestics to keep her waiting no longer. Mr. Jenkins appeared shortly afterwards, profusely apologetic. Reaching England she found that old Lord Bristol had at length been gathered to his fathers and that she was, therefore, if not the Duchess of Kingston, the Countess of Bristol. To Medows' dismay this occur-

rence saved her from being tried as a commoner and permitted her to be judged by and before her peers. The daunted adventurer therefore gave Ann Cradock her last instructions and put water between him and Westminster. Even if proved guilty, his aunt by marriage could not now be punished.

On the fifteenth day of April 1776 this most singular trial in all the chronicles of English law opened before the highest nobility of the kingdom in Westminster Hall. When their Majesties had been seated and the Court, Elizabeth came forward to the bar, attended at a little distance by three ladies of her bedchamber, her chaplain, physician and apothecary. As she approached the bar she curtsied three times and then fell upon her knees when the Lord High Steward said, "Madame, you may rise." Rising, she curtsied to him and to the peers, who returned her compliments. The Lord High Steward then informed her of the charge against her, to which short speech she made answer by reading a paper to the effect that she was sensible of the fact that she was to be tried by the most unprejudiced and august assembly in the world. Her arraignment was thereupon read, to which she pleaded in a clear voice, "Not guilty, my Lords." The clerk of the Crown then asked her how she would be tried, to which she made reply, "By God and

my peers." There fell a short silence and the clerk said, "God send your Ladyship a good deliverance."

Four days of cross-examination of various witnesses followed, among them Ann Cradock, who earned every halfpenny of Medows' bribe, for she was mercilessly questioned. It was fortunate for the fellow himself that he was east of the channel, for the Duchess in a brilliant speech left not one of his vices uncared for. But as all might foresee, when the junior baron among the Peers, Lord Sundridge in England, and in Scotland the Duke of Argyle, arose to pronounce the first verdict, the Duchess stood convicted. Argyle, who had married the widow of her first love, the Duke of Hamilton, placed his hand upon his heart and said, "Guilty, upon my honor." The majority of the peers followed his example and the Lord High Steward bade the usher of the black rod bring the prisoner before the bar. The penalty for bigamy was to be burnt in the hand, but on being sentenced Elizabeth desired the clerk of the Crown to read a slip of paper, which she gave him and upon which was written, "I plead the privilege of the peerage." The Lords, considering her plea, agreed to allow it, and the Lord High Steward thereupon informed that she would be discharged upon the payment of the usual fees.

Thus ended this famous and today somewhat ludi-

crous trial, and in reality its termination marked the conclusion of the career of her frolic Grace of Kingston. She left England immediately, and before a decree of "Ne exeat regno" might be issued against her, for there was some talk of attaching her property. His Grace of Kingston's will remained inviolate and from the day she sailed from Dover to that of her death, she spent in most of the capitals of Europe her fortune, with a sort of sad and desperate prodigality. Her friends for the most part did not desert her, and in St. Petersburg Catherine the Great made of her a devoted companion (they were in some fashion kindred spirits); but there were rogues who cheated her continually and false friends who lived like parasites upon her bounty. In 1788 when eight-and-sixty years old, she settled down in Paris, and for a time seemed happy and at peace, but the news came to her one day at table that she had once again been flagrantly dealt with, this time in the matter of a house, by one whom she had fondly considered a friend. For a minute passion mastered her and the excitement caused the rupture of a blood vessel. Confined to her bed she could not even for a day still the restlessness of her nature, and she arose to dine a day or so later. After dinner she felt ill but made nothing of it, drinking a little Madeira and sitting in an armchair while she desired two of her ladies to hold her hands.

Nodding, her head, still wonderfully handsome, dropped and she seemed to be asleep. It was only when her companions sensed the coldness of her hands that they perceived that her frolic Grace, the once incomparable Chudleigh, was dead.

When the news of her death reached England, even her oldest enemies were saddened. All could enumerate her faults while she had lived, but dead, she seemed suddenly to command from them a certain affection. After all, they too were old and they remembered Elizabeth when she had been the most beautiful woman in England. It grieved them that she should have died in exile, an old woman, lonely and not a little sad. And what courage she had had, what fire, what vitality! Even the cynical Walpole was depressed. Speaking of her personality and that of her first husband, Augustus, Lord Bristol, he sighed and tapped his snuff box: "Why, good gad, Sir, she was always the better man of the two."

LA MAUPIN

LA MAUPIN

NOT ALONE BY VIRTUE OF A CELEBRATED ROMANCE does this seventeenth-century French girl remain one of the most baffling figures in history, a gallant lady in whose character viciousness and virtue were so tumultuously active that in the end their curious internecine quarrel destroyed her. Gautier's dramatization of her life under a title that flattered his heroine with the particle, for the husband of La Maupin, though possibly of worthy antecedents, claimed no "de" before his name, does her memory an injustice, for the actual facts of her career are incomparably more lurid, infinitely more dramatic. The Great Romantic's spurred and booted beauty, ravishing perhaps as fiction, struts somewhat emptily beside her prototype, the vehicle of a literary faction's credo and of a corpuscular content less brilliantly red than faintly purple. Mademoiselle de Maupin

and La Maupin are different beings, largely, perhaps, because in painting the latter's portrait, Gautier left much unredeemed from a polite chiaroscuro, and confounded the mænad with the pretty lady.

La Maupin was an "enfant du siècle" and the morals of her century in the particular society, city and nation into which she was born were not only free but markedly vicious. France, during the later years of the reign of her most pretentious Louis, scoffed privately at the defensive morality of his last mistress, a woman clever enough to have cozened him into marrying her, and publicly followed the fashion set by his younger brother, a middle-aged Lucullus whose vices, reproduced with embellishments in his son, have made perpetuate the astonishing infamy of the Regency. Aging, the Sun-king forgot La Vallière and De Montespan and a hundred lesser blossoms gathered by the way, wallowed in senescent content in the rancid domesticity created for him by the widow of a minor poet, issued peevish edicts against dueling and allowed society to drift in the wake of Philippe of France, Duke of Orléans, a prince of a curious wit and a passion for certain manners of antiquity. Noblemen who sought to obscure convention and the edicts of fashion, sinned gayly against nature while their ladies recreated in their boudoirs the boskage of Lesbos or fought duels one with another for the fa-

vors of pampered gallants. The world of society rolled in an orbit of frantic sexual aberration while the King, his rank maturity behind him, made complacent moan with his final indiscretion at the evils he pretended to see about him. Into such a time and such a mise en scène as this was La Maupin born and it were, therefore, as intelligent to condemn her vices as to make mock of one's great-grandmother for wearing crinoline or to attack the memory of Thomas Jefferson because he owned African slaves.

Her father, secretary to the Count of Armagnac, a great nobleman who was one of the seven grand officers of the Crown, was one Gaston D'Aubigny, by all accounts the devil of a fellow who feared neither God nor man nor devil and who, from dawn to eve, drank and diced and fought and from eve to dawn achieved further fracturings of the Decalogue. D'Aubigny, a blade with no love for a home and hearthstone, was, it is very possible, annoyed by the birth of a daughter in 1670, but he was man enough to shoulder his responsibility and to give the child, as it grew older, the only education of which he was capable, and, indeed, the only one which he deemed at all worth while. This was, in point of fact, far from meager, since, in his capacity as secretary to his lord, he was able to secure the services of the teachers of the pages of the royal stables, D'Armagnac

holding, as he did, among his offices, that of Grand Equerry to the King. Courses in writing, dancing, grammar, and drawing constituted a curriculum that he forced his daughter to observe while he himself undertook the vital training and development of her sword arm. In a day when, it was estimated, there were more than 10,000 professional duelists between the Latin Quarter and the Faubourg St. Germain, it was D'Aubigny's opinion that one unversed in the use of foil or rapier was unlikely to survive one pedestrian hour upon the streets. He himself, a bravo of parts noted for a redoubtable style of fence, spent the majority of his days in salles d'armes, and was admirably fitted to impart his knowledge to his child. By the time she was sixteen the girl could hold her own not only with him but with the best of the steel-wristed adventurers who lounged or strutted in the big, high-ceiled rooms where the only sound was the deep breathing of the fencers, the brittle ring of steel and the occasional harsh "touché!" as one swordsman buttoned another upon his plastron. Mademoiselle D'Aubigny, slender, with firm muscles and breasted almost like a boy, went habitually clad as one, though the vivid, delicate beauty of her face misled opponents who trifled to their undoing with the perfection of her technique. Her beauty and the growing legend of her extraordinary skill as a fencer was not long in reach-

ing the ears of her father's master, a nobleman who, unlike some of his peers, was an amateur of women and a very personable magnifico into the bargain. D'Armagnac commanded her presence as an appetizer to his dinner one summer evening, examined her with pleasurable surprise, pinched her ear and nodded to her father. Not precisely an example of the operation of the "droit de cuissage," but a custom to which D'Aubigny and far less his daughter might take no exception. Mademoiselle remained at the Hôtel D'Armagnac and later was found a husband, a young man of impeccable if colorless character resident at St. Germain-en-Laye, a Monsieur Maupin whose occupation it was to lend respectability to the nocturnal absences of his girl-wife from his own snug home. In this fashion matters progressed for a year, after which time D'Armagnac seems to have felt old age creeping upon him and his seventeen-year-old mistress was absent no more from home. Thus restricted, the passion of her nature threatened to explode her husband's roof from over his head and even to destroy an already unparalleled passivity of attitude. The poor man knew not where to turn, and when offered a small official position in the provinces he seems to have quitted Paris with thanksgivings that his wife forced him to depart alone. The spleen of his Lordship of Armagnac at this rupture of his planning affected La Maupin not at

all. She replied to his demand for explanations to the effect that her husband's appointments did not suffice for two and threw herself into the arms of a young gentleman of the Midi named Séranne whose stalwart person and vigorous swordplay much pleased her. With him she frequented every salle d'armes in Paris, fencing like Bussy, beautiful as any Antinous in his slender 'teens, and exquisitely unmoral.

She was eighteen when circumstances over which he had had too much control, a fatal duel behind the church of the Carmelites, forced Séranne to leave Paris for Marseilles. Boasting property and riches in his native South he persuaded his mistress to accompany him and the two set out with pockets precariously unlined, to seize fortune in safer pastures. Séranne's riches of course proved mythical but La Maupin, in whose utterly generous nature there existed no desire for anything save loyalty and love, made nothing of her lover's deceit. She proposed to pay their board by giving in the smoky taproom of their Marseilles tavern nightly exhibitions of fencing, a project that succeeded admirably, so superb was their play and so perfect in grace, so alluring, in lithe and vivid silhouette, the person of the younger swordsman. La Maupin, be it understood, dressed as a Cavalier though her audiences were informed of her sex. The astonishing strength and flawless

technique of her assault, her parades, parries and ripostes, however, one night caused some cynic disbelief touching her womanhood to linger in the minds and on the tongues of the gentlemen who watched, a disbelief which the girl very promptly dispelled by flinging down her foil, and facing the audience with flashing eyes, tearing open her shirt so that all could determine the question for themselves. The returns that evening were very munificent indeed. But though the partners seasoned their exhibitions with songs and stories, the demand for their services did not always satisfy them, so that La Maupin sought other means of livelihood. As she possessed a very beautiful if untutored contralto voice, or as it was then called, "bas-dessus," she sought an interview with Pierre Gaultier, director of the Marseilles Academy, a well-known personage in the world of music, comparable in the sphere of his activities and in significance to Signor Gatti-Casazza of the Metropolitan Opera of today in New York. M. Gaultier gave her an audition, marked the notable volume and rich timbre of her voice, and despite its obvious uncultivation, engaged her at once. Her début proved a brilliant success, her notes entrancing critics to whom the "bas-dessus" was a new tone in French opera.

With this new unfolding of her talents La Maupin, or Mlle. D'Aubigny as she was named upon the play-

bills, dissolved her alliance with her duelist lover. Séranne passes from the picture, the second of a long list of lovers but few of whom seem to have left more than a transient impression upon her heart. Though not yet twenty, La Maupin had become a confirmed coquette, less by choice or wanton viciousness than by instinct. Like the Spanish princesses of whom a Frenchman once characteristically wrote, she had "le diable au corps," and the rampant polygamous inclinations of her being denied her the possible solace of a unique devotion. Trained in the exercises and diversions of men, she was no stranger to the admiration of women who justifiably mistook her sex, and little by little the virus instilled into an ardent nature by the opportunities that offered themselves to one engaged in so dangerous a mummery, obtained its effect. Out of a sky that Séranne had no reason to believe aught but clear, his belle amie fell violently in love with a gently beautiful young Marseillaise, followed her to a convent in Avignon, managed to steal her away from her godly duress by outrageous means, and never more returned to him or to the agonized and hysterical Gaultier. Three months later the ravished novice returned to her parents to be received with lamentations, and an edict condemning the "Sieur" D'Aubigny to death by fire was published abroad through the South. Ostensively to punish the sacrilege of the kidnaping of

her friend from the convent, the erroneous prefix was a tactful and delicate denial of the more shocking circumstance of the proceeding. Bending her steps once more towards her beloved Paris, however, La Maupin laughed the tribunal's admonitions to scorn. Apprehension was a danger hardly worthy to be reckoned with since the pathological peculiarities of thousands of thousands of handsome young adventurers answering more or less to her description would occupy the whole attention of the law for years. Passing northward she did not fear to linger in Poitiers, where she studied for a month or two assiduously at her singing under the direction of an adept but drunken master, and to continue in her own time and by easy stages upon a road every turn of which brought her a new adventure.

Faring pleasantly, a gallant and beautiful figure, the pommel of a long rapier beneath her right palm and the plume in her curling-brimmed hat waving a little, softly, in the gentle airs, she rode one evening into an inn-yard where a number of lackeys held steaming horses while their masters drank within. In the tap-room she called for Burgundy and tapped a yawn as a youth of distinguished appearance and rich dress sat him down at the table beside her and smiled a greeting. A company of gentlemen surrounded them, members of the boy's suite, and as the drawers came and went with the good

full-bodied wine, their master became argumentative and wide of gesture. He discoursed upon the points of his horse, La Maupin, only mildly bored, upon those of her own mount, until the subject wearied her. Rising to go she found herself restrained by a clumsy hand that tore the lace upon her wide, back-turned cuff. The wine was spilt when she struck down the young noble's arm and his followers' blades were free of their scabbards in two seconds. The principals, one hot with an anger that sobered him, the other cold as ice, adjourned to the inn-yard. La Maupin, to whom the game was an old one, faced a young man trained by the best masters in France, but a certain lack of experience betrayed his notable tuition. His opponent, twice parrying thrusts with some justice deemed deadly by him who launched them, riposted with a blade of chilled lightning that pierced him through the shoulder and appeared in red nakedness six inches behind him. By craning his neck he could just perceive it. La Maupin sheathed and aided his gentlemen to carry him to a bed in the inn. He was, she was told, Louis-Joseph d'Albert de Luynes, Comte D'Albert, son of the Duke of Luynes and Anne de Rohan Montbazon, and further, a youth much prized at court and looked to for great things. She observed that she herself was a demoiselle of birth but without fortune and while D'Albert gasped, gave her name as Mlle. d'Aubigny, dite

La Maupin. Retiring she left D'Albert a sown furrow of romance. Obstinately, he refused to be cured unless Mademoiselle nursed him. He tore bandages from his wound and raved in delirium until her heart misgave her and she undertook to secure his convalescence. Her capitulation resulted in the one lasting love of her life. D'Albert afterwards loved variously and widely, but almost until her death, he owned her conquest, as she owned his, to be the one most cherished. That convalescence was a long one but rendered ineffable by mutual delights. Cured, the young man followed his destiny but he had secured the promises of further trysts.

Alone once more La Maupin rode to Rouen, where she fell in with one Gabriel-Vincent Thévenard, a young singer whose intention it was to achieve fame in Paris with a genuinely commendable bass voice. To the girl the meeting was a godsend. No plan could have more neatly suited her and though as a lover the bourgeois proved less thrilling than the nobleman she rode with him to Paris, leisurely, making love and music by the way. In the great city, while Gabriel sought engagements, she bethought her of the tribunal of the Parliament of Aix and, to quash it forever, sought audience with her one-time protector, my lord of Armagnac. That dignitary found her more beautiful than ever and charmingly complaisant. He could see no reason for so

delicate and perfect a body being consumed to ashes and said a word or two to this effect in the ear of his sovereign, as Louis held his petite levée. The matter was arranged, of course. After all, what was the law to jeopardize the fragrant flesh of pretty women? Gabriel in his emprise was no less successful. Jean-Nicolas Francine, successor of Jean-Baptiste Lully as director of the Opera, employed during the season of 1690 both a bass and a contralto, and the latter made her début as Pallas in *Hermione and Cadmus,* libretto by Quinault, music by Lully, in the last month of that year. Paris came, listened and marveled, applauded to the echo and sought assignations with the new star by squadrons and regiments. Thévenard, like Séranne after her Marseilles triumph, was superseded at once. Dukes sought her favors and hung her with jewels while she still persisted in going abroad in the habit of a duelist and pursuing amours in keeping with her dress.

A perfectly characteristic exploit was her castigation of the tenor Dumeni, the pet of the pit and favorite of the stalls, a vulgar, mannerless capon, snatched by Lully from a scullery for the sake of a voice undeniably glorious. Incredibly conceited, dulled by a sort of taurine stupidity, and a drunkard who could absorb five bottles of Mâcon at a sitting, he was wont to strut about the dressing rooms and corridors, making obscene pro-

posals to the prima donna of the piece in rehearsal and otherwise comporting himself in the fashion of a stud bull in a deer park. He outraged, one evening, the soprano, Rochois, summoned blushes to the veteran cheeks of the fascinating Moreau sisters, and finally rolled towards La Maupin. The latter turned her back on him. Dumeni gurgled a coarse epithet and blundered away, but not before the contralto observed in a sub-acid undertone: "We will speak of this again." The conventional phrase of challenge amused him, for he leered luminously. Poor fool, he was uninstructed as to the fair one with whom he had to deal. Pallas that evening was never more superb in Lully's score of Quinault's tragedy, but when the piece was over, La Maupin donned her male clothing and sought a nest of shadows on the Place des Victoires. Anon came the egregious tenor, humming a naughty stave, to find himself accosted by a formidable gallant who cuffed his head with shocking violence and bade him draw. But Dumeni, though he carried a sword, handled it like the spit to which he had once been accustomed, and quaked horribly at the thought of a combat. He was, he howled, a poor but worthy man with not a sou, far less a golden louis, to his name. "Good," replied the dangerous unknown, "then, as you insult women and lack the courage to defend yourself against men, I shall give myself the pleasure of punish-

ing an insolent rogue and humiliating a coward." The slender blade snapped back into its scabbard and Dumeni, swung around by a hand of steel, received upon his rear fifty strokes from a flexible but solid cane. La Maupin strolled away to experience a salutary afterthought and returned to her victim. Dumbly the miserable giant offered his posteriors but this time was relieved of his snuff-box and chronometer. As far as La Maupin was concerned, the evening had then been conducted to a satisfactory close.

Next day the tenor, subdued and strangely rheumatic, appeared to electrify the green room with a tale comparable only to Falstaff's touching the self-divisible rogues in buckram. La Maupin listened with respectful interest for a time and then exploded her mine.

"You lie; you, my good sir, are a coward and a poltroon. Ladies, what Dumeni has just told you is a flagrant untruth. He was attacked but by me alone. This abject animal who so glibly insults women trembles like an aspen at the point of a sword. After giving him a buffet I asked him for satisfaction; he shook like a chicken. On his refusal to cross swords I gave him a sound thrashing and to prove his cowardice I took his snuff-box and his watch."

She produced them. The green room shook to spontaneous cheering, applause that seemed to merit at least

half a dozen encores, and Dumeni, scarlet save where he was a royal purple, lumbered into outer darkness, bellowing like a spanked baby. La Maupin had once and for all made away with the community pest.

Paris in the meantime hummed like a hive with enthusiasm and praise for her. On September 11, 1693, she created the rôle of the enchantress in *Dido,* libretto by Mme. de Xaintonge, score by Desmarets, and welcomed home from the wars her beloved D'Albert, now the darling of society and the idol of the French armies in the Low Countries. The Count, however, returned shortly to the siege of Namur, after fighting a duel or two and breaking a number of hearts, and his departure occasioned a very considerable irregularity on the part of one of his bereaved mistresses. La Maupin, richly attired as a young gentleman of position, attended one of the famous balls held regularly at the Palais-Royal by Philippe of France. In the argot of today, she "crashed the gate." Unbidden she stared down the first defense of lackeys, deceived the second by pretending that she had strayed from her companions, and achieved, by the great stairs, the guard-room. Passing down Mansard's gallery she brazenly entered the drawing-rooms glittering with ladies sheathed in jewels, and flaming with rich materials, and decorated and illumined by pendent candelabra hung with brilliants. In the ball

rooms great personages danced the coranto, the branle and the pavane to the accompaniment of "Malbrouk s'en va-t-en guerre," a melody less appropriate for dancing sixteen years later, and among other diverting spectacles, a young gallant with a headpiece composed of four different masks, each one of them of a noble well known at court, danced so cleverly with four ladies that each faced a partner, however impassive of countenance. La Maupin was in her glory. She danced with the most desired partners, ogled and flirted, juggled charmingly indiscreet proposals with the masked beauties and displayed her shapely person to such marked effect that she excited not a little jealousy among less handsome cavaliers. She singled out in particular one delectable marquise, exquisite as a Watteau portrait, with whom she trod a number of measures, suggested impossible alternatives to dancing, and whom she finally embraced passionately upon the mouth. The lady screamed, a tinkling crescendo, and three gentlemen, all suitors, encircled the couple in a trice. La Maupin replied to their heated observations with perfect calm. "At your service, gentlemen. I will await you beneath the first lamp on the street of St. Thomas-du-Louvre." Gaining the rendezvous she found the lamp extinguished but her three opponents made noth-

ing of the shadows. On the Quai du Louvre the first of them drew and engaged so suddenly that the girl laughed. "Gently, gently! A little patience, my lord. You seem to desire retiring to bed at a very early hour." The blades rang each on each and the heels of the duelists pounded sharply in the still night. The darkness lightened an instant as a timorous moon appeared amid the wrack and La Maupin, parrying, spoke clearly. "This time I've had enough, I touch." A masterly riposte and her opponent collapsed upon his knees. The second cockerel was on her in an instant but the combat was brief. The moon peeped again and she marked her man against a wall. "Ha! Now that I've seen you, farewell." He fell, pierced through the shoulder. Startled, the last of her enemies fenced carefully and with calm, but a feint followed by a thrust "par la ligne basse" undid him. "Touched," he said as he stumbled. "The contrary would have surprised me," observed the Amazon and returned to the ball. There she sought an opportunity to speak with Philippe himself and apprised that prince of the fortunes of three of his guests. Sending to succor them, he paused. His aging but still handsome, though unvirile, face clouded. "Another duel! Who fought these gentlemen? A woman? And who?"

"Mademoiselle Maupin."

"Aha! I've heard of that jade's handiwork. So you are she?"

He examined her pleasurably through a glass handled with emeralds and diamonds.

"Still at your old tricks."

"Your Royal Highness knows that sometimes I do not kill His Majesty's subjects and that there are sweeter meetings than are found at a sword's point—"

"Be silent, gadfly."

"I will do more. I will retire." Bowing, left foot advanced, so low that her curls swept the floor, she completed her vengeance by informing her marquise of the fate of her friends. Then she went home in the gray dawn humming a hardy ditty.

"Du Menil sur la note
Ne pousse pas si haut
Que fait d'un coup de motte
La petite Moreau.
Flon flon, larira dondaine,
Flon, flon, larira dondon."

Next day the city was agog with the news and La Maupin confidently awaited arrest but Louis was in a tolerant humor. His laws against dueling, he stated, governed men not women, but she took no chances.

Saddling a horse she rode to Brussels until the affair had ceased to occupy the tongue of Society.

Belgium was governed during these years by Maximilian Marie Emmanuel, Duke and Elector of Bavaria, a prince who owed his government to Austria and Spain, for which dominions he had warred against the Turkish and the French. A florid Don Juan of uncounted gallantries with women of all classes from duchesses to kitchen maids, he paid well for his briefest loves and married the more notable of his mistresses to noblemen of his suite or of his army. La Maupin, singing Dido in Jean Wolfgang Franck's opera of *Æneas*, did not long remain unsolicited. Maîtresse-en-titre for a year and a little, she could have made a fortune had she been a mercenary lady of pleasure but that was never her failing. The position of ex-officio first lady of the land pleased her and her ducal Bavarian was a lusty lover as well as being admirably open-handed, but the French girl, after an interval, proved too furious a bed-mate. Deeply chagrined, she stabbed herself in earnest in her rôle of the Carthaginian queen and was asked to leave the country, politely asked, however, with a purse of forty thousand livres. It was the wrong anodyne. La Maupin hurled the gold in the face of the startled emissary. Two hours later she took the road to Spain.

Her opinion of the lands of his Catholic Majesty became, soon after she reached Madrid, exceedingly low. As she knew neither the cachuca, the fandango nor the bolero she was unable to join a troop of dancers and there existed no opera. Completely lacking funds, she was eventually reduced to securing a position as lady's maid to the Countess Marino, an Italian beauty whose husband was at Court in a ministerial capacity. The Countess and the soubrette very early found themselves in a state of imperfect sympathy one towards another but, for the first time in her life, La Maupin could resent slurs neither upon her intelligence nor upon the felicity of her endeavors to please. But her time came at last. Having saved enough of her wages to allow her to reach Paris she dressed her mistress's hair for a state function and added to a really magnificent coiffure a half dozen small radishes which might only be observed from behind. The Countess, after complimenting her on her handiwork, and receiving the somewhat cryptic response that its virtue would only be appreciated to the full at the ball, departed radiant. Her appearance provoked such a distinguished reception that after a half hour plenipotentiaries and grandees were forming a queue at her heels to observe her. When a kindly old magnifico informed her of what was so attractive to the company she seemed to fall into a sort of molten

stupor. Tarrying no longer she returned home, but her maid had silently stolen away, and the Arabs could have been no swifter in their flight.

She had been three years absent from Paris and her career, but Francine was so jubilant at her return that he at once presented her with the position of prima donna, vacated by the soprano Rochois, retired, and she returned to the public in November 1698, in the part of Minerva in *Theseus,* libretto by Quinault, score by Lully. Paris, which had always yielded her a large and vociferous following, gave her a clamorous welcome home, even though in one or two of the parts she later sang, a soprano and not a contralto was called for by the score. Of the 29 parts which over a period of 15 years she created in the Opera of Paris, only one failed to find favor with the public, that of Armide in the piece by that name by the old team of Quinault and Lully. La Maupin insisted on singing a soprano's part to a contralto's register and the result called forth a long and popular ballad of reproof. This was in November 1703, two years before her retirement. But save for this artistic vagary she never wanted for wide and enthusiastic support from her audiences, a circumstance that made her almost immune from official interference in her little affairs of a private nature. On her return from Madrid she encountered once more the debonair

D'Albert and the two found their love to be as vital a passion as ever. She also at this time fell out with Thévenard, promoted to the position of primo basso, and their quarrel became a local wonder. Singing amorously one to another in more than one piece, La Maupin would bite the poor fellow's ear while he retaliated by secret but violent pinches. Remembering Dumeni, he dared not go abroad, but ate and slept in his dressing room until he could bear it no longer. He capitulated handsomely at last, in a missive not without pathos and a certain sense of humor.

"My Dear Julia: Every one in the world has his (and her) faults. I freely admit that you handle a sword far better than I do; you will admit that I sing better than you. With this settled, you will understand that were you to embed only three fingers of steel in my chest, my voice, providing that I were not killed, would be seriously injured and I rely absolutely on the livelihood it wins me apart from the pleasure it affords me by allowing me to mirror myself in your eyes when we act together and when you do not glare at me, a procedure which much alters the sweetness of your expression.

"Let us, then, make peace, my dear Julia; I come to place myself bound hand and foot before you (in writing, of course, considering the danger of an interview); pardon a blunder which I sincerely repent and

be merciful to me." Julia was merciful but on condition.

"Since M. Thévenard so frankly admits the distaste he entertains for a meeting sword in hand, even with a woman, which leaves me no other course than to congratulate him upon his prudence, I consent to forgive him his offense. But I wish that, with this pardon granted, he ask me forgiveness before those who witnessed the injury; if he takes care to reunite them in my presence, I will keep my word."

The basso complied to the letter with this proviso and made nothing of the jibes at his expense, since he retained his health unimpaired. Not long after this La Maupin further won the affection of her brother and sister artists by publicly challenging a petty noble of Périgord, a Baron de Servan, whose unamiable eccentricity it was to fill the foyer with accounts of how he had enjoyed the favors of this or that lady of the ensemble. Unqualifiedly mendacious, these little tales annoyed every one and one evening, before a large company, the girl named him liar to his face, called him out and ran him through the arm. Shortly afterwards his estates in Périgord received him home.

In spite of these exploits, however, and an extremely full operatic career, La Maupin found time to cherish her beloved Count, a young man by this time sought after not only by less aristocratic belles but by ladies

of very high rank indeed. She disputed so violently his favors with the Duchess of Luxembourg that one day, as that great lady knelt at prayers, she knelt beside her and promised in a conversational tone to cut her Grace's throat if the young soldier ever again made free of her boudoir. Fortunately, perhaps, for both she and her intended victim, D'Albert, imprisoned for a fatal duel, left France on regaining his freedom and desolated a number of ladies by marrying at Compiègne Mlle. Montigny, late mistress of La Maupin's one time Prince Charming, the Elector of Bavaria, which prince gave her away with the handsome dowry of 40,000 livres a year. Heartbroken in genuine earnest, La Maupin forsook for ever the opposite sex. Her last love and, indeed, the last chapter of her life were at hand.

Madame La Marquise de Florensac, very beautiful, witty, and elegantly vicious, died on July 2nd, 1705, after an illness thought to be puerperal fever, of two days. Her death bereaved a great many whom it should not have so devastatingly affected and, in particular, it crushed La Maupin, for the two years since the marriage of the Count D'Albert, her favored and most passionate lover. After the sad event the stricken singer appeared no more at the Opera. Her last public appearance had been in the part of Isabelle in *The Venetian Lady*, the libretto of which comedy was written by

La Motte, the score by La Barre, on May 26, preceding the tragedy. In August, having come to a decision, she wrote a last note to D'Albert apprising him of her intention to quit forever a life of pleasure by entering a convent, and, receiving no violent opposition to this plan from her only trusted friend, she put her design into execution. Once committed, hers was not a nature that yielded to vacillation or a change of heart. For two years she achieved a more or less satisfactory sublimation of her natural passions by transferring these to a contemplation of the Divine Bridegroom, but the struggle to do so shattered her health. She died in 1707 aged thirty-seven, destroyed by an inclination to do evil in the sight of her God and a fixed intention not to. The war between the two effected her death, there is no doubt.

As an historical figure La Maupin remains memorable for two reasons, both of them cogent. She was the first contralto to appear before a Parisian audience and in her time the most applauded performer in France. She was, if not the first swordsman of her day, very nearly the most effective and renowned and in her alternative part of a woman of many loves, not all of them light, she was a famous and widely desired beauty. Her operatic career, lasting, as it did in the metropolis, for only fifteen years, would fill a volume if fully treated

from a critical and appreciative angle, but across the gulf of more than two centuries, it is rather her picaresque and vigorous life that attracts us. As has been observed, the moralist or censor will squander his abilities in attempting to nail her to a cross of shame, for her vices were the fruit of her epoch and her many and not inglorious sins the product of the times. Beautiful, valiant, generous and superbly unchaste, she represents a perfect if markedly individual example of the Dame Galante, nor is she in any way to be confused with the Donna Delinquente outlined by Lombroso. Her extraordinary masculine courage and lack of feminine distaste for physical combat links her with Belle Starr, the American gun-woman, Calamity Jane of hallowed memory and one or two more, but in her skill as a fighter with a designated and particular weapon she stands in a place apart. All these named, and other gallant ladies, were characterized by great personal courage and a manly aptitude for conflict, but of them all, Julie D'Aubigny, the incredible Maupin, strutting the duelist- and bravo-infested streets of seventeenth-century Paris, is by far the most debonnaire. Her "mise en scène" does much for her even as when on the day of her debut in 1690, playing the part of Pallas, a ribald punster ascribed her success to her "chemise en scène," but it does not do all. In herself La Maupin possessed many moments of sublimity.

THE LAST VALOIS

THE LAST VALOIS

JEANNE DE SAINT-REMY DE LUZ AND DE VALOIS constitutes in French history the final scandalous period to a line of sovereigns who ruled France, however ineffectually, from 1328 to 1589. One hundred and seventy-four years after Clement, the fanatical Jacobin, had driven the naked blade he had held hidden in his sleeve into the belly of Henry III, and cleared the way to the throne for the House of Bourbon in the person of Henry of Navarre, a beaten, bruised and verminous child of seven established identity in a Paris byway with a royal line long deemed extinct and achieved maturity to ruin that one which had superseded it. The Bourbons' last king of the old régime owed, in the estimates of contemporaries, the impulse of his downfall to the astonishing intrigues of this last Valois and with the scandal of his Queen's necklace was born the doctrine that was to

feed the guillotine. Goethe, Mirabeau and the historian Pierre de Nolhac unite in judging the affair of the almost fabulous diamonds the effective weapon that discredited royalty forever in the eyes of the people. The Revolution, following hard upon its dismissal from the courts, blotted it from the public mind but consummately illustrated the efficiency of its handiwork. Jeanne de Valois, passionate and unscrupulous, an egomaniac to whom the terms liberty, equality and fraternity were as alien as sunbursts to the moon, was nevertheless an agent for their eventual triumphant currency. Like the majority of her family she died unmourned, but though the last she was not the least nor yet the worst of the seed of Philip VI. She possessed, for example, a courage that had not always proved a characteristic of the princes of her line.

Accustomed at the age of five to beg in the streets of Paris, adding to her pathetic prayer the name of kings long dead, she became inured to brutality and pain. "Give alms in the name of God to a poor orphan of the blood of the Valois," drew from hurrying pedestrians brief glances of contempt for a ruse so palpable, and blows that it should be employed in their regard. Dragging her little body back to a fetid garret at nightfall, she delivered what coppers she had received to a mother who detested her and who, with the aid of her

paramour, stripped the child naked of the few rags that covered her, tied her to a wooden bedstead and beat her till she fell unconscious, striped red and black with blood and shocking bruises. The child's mind, rendered frequently vacant by hunger and torture, nevertheless clung to the one fact, her identity with a once famous name. She even knew the arms of her house, the azure fasces and the golden fleur de lys, and mumbled them to passers-by through cut and swollen lips, with a baby's confidence that they must impress. In the end they did, and a decade or so after her salvation from the gutter Parisians remembered the waif, and marveled at the fact the statement of which had earned their blows.

Jeanne the beggar child was actually a Valois, directly descended from Henry II by a male line the first of which was the king's bastard, Henri de Saint-Remy, by Nicole de Savigny. Legitimatized and created Baron of Luz and of Valois, Henri de Saint-Remy had by Chrétienne de Luz, René, who by Jacquette Brévot had Pierre, who by Marie de Mulet had Nicolas-René, who by Marie-Elizabeth de Vienne had Jacques de Saint-Remy de Valois, Baron of Luz and of Valois and father of the mendicant Jeanne. At the Castle of Fontette, six leagues from Bar-sur-Aube, the last possessor of the title, born in 1717, lived as had his fathers, like some-

thing of a backwoodsman, hunted all day, drank and made rustic love all night, and did all three on such a scale that he was forced year by year to sell more of his estates to stave off his creditors and finally to live in one room of his château, a room with no carpeting save that of rushes and hung with arras shredded with the wear of many centuries. Jacques de Saint-Remy, gigantic of stature and appetite, is a familiar type; a petty nobleman in whom the indications of nobility appear thinly and far apart; lacking utterly in education, a bull of a man with less wisdom than any bull, the eventual victim of the female of his own species slightly better equipped with cunning. The blood of kings crossed throughout too many generations with that of lusty but vulgar wenches, produced in the last Baron of Luz and of Valois a congenital debauchee cursed with a splendid physique and a potent inclination to destroy it. With the aid of Marie Jossel, a servant girl who bore him two bastards, became his Baroness in 1753, and in 1756 presented him with the subject of this paper, he effectually destroyed not only his physique but the remains of his fortune and in 1760 found himself penniless and without property, trudging the road to Paris. With him trudged his lady and their three remaining children, four having died, fortunately perhaps, while still cradled. Marie Jossel, his wife and one-time

mistress, was, one judges from the facts of Jeanne's childhood, no common trull, but a physically beautiful degenerate with a will to do evil and ability to satisfy it. Arrived in Paris the ragged Baron housed his family in a garret from which he was almost immediately ousted by the Baroness, who kicked him into the streets from which, in turn, he was only plucked to die in the Hôtel-Dieu on February 17, 1762, barely two years after his departure from Fontette. In his place his wife cherished a solid young man of Sardinia and the two lived on what they stole and what Jeanne, the late baron's eldest daughter, begged, and to amuse themselves, tortured the girl in various and unspeakable ways. As has been observed, Jeanne was not a successful beggar but when she was seven years old the thin and broken wail of her child's voice repeating the royal name and coat of her family finally awakened attention.

Near Passy, by the roadside, one April morning in 1763, Jeanne awaited a carriage bearing two passengers the splendor of whose dress augured a possible fruition for her plea. As it drew near and made to pass her she repeated her pathetic formula and suddenly wept with relief when at a gesture from one of the occupants, the coachman of the equipage reined in his horses. A hand beckoning, the ragged child approached. She raised her discolored eyes to behold a great lady who told her to

repeat her phrases. At the words "blood of the Valois" the lady checked her.

"Blood of whom?"

"Give alms to—"

"Enough. 'Tis the omega of that apostrophe I ask to hear, not the alpha."

"Valois, Madame."

"Ha! Well, if there be truth in this tale I myself will be your mother and you shall be an orphan and a beggar no longer. But if you are lying, child, things will go hard with you. Ann, my love, hand her in."

A gentleman so elegant that he might have been the Duc de Richelieu himself had he not been too young for that aged and dissolute dandy, protested, but briefly.

"A lie, obviously, Marie. Palpably a lie."

"It is my whim to believe her, dear one. If you grudge your arm, extend, I beg you, your stick."

The gentleman extended his stick, and Jeanne, thereby assisted, entered the carriage and it proceeded on its way. The Baroness of Luz and of Valois had that morning beaten her daughter for the last time.

Marie-Madeleine de Hellencourt de Dromesnil, Marquise de Boulainvilliers, the lady of the carriage and benefactress of the guttersnipe so illustriously named, was at this time three and thirty years of age, beautiful, generous, but the dupe of no one. She conducted the

beggar child to her house, saw that it was scrupulously bathed, and plunged at once into the business of verifying its identity and descent. Learning from Jeanne herself of her birth at Fontette and her pauper's existence watching flocks in the pastures near Bar-sur-Aube, Madame de Boulainvilliers dispatched a notary to the church of St. Martin's at Langres where, so the child fragmentarily remembered hearing from them, her father and mother had been married, and to Fontette itself and to the neighborhood of Bar. The man returned with a memorandum that certified beyond all manner of doubt the truth of the waif's apparently incredible tale. Madame de Boulainvilliers had indeed snatched from a deep pit of adversity the great-great-great-great-granddaughter of the spouse of Catherine de Medici, the Second Henry, whose mistress and the manner of whose death were the only markable things concerning him. It was to be regretted, perhaps, that it was not upon the body of Diane de Poictiers that Henry begat the first Baron de Luz and de Valois before the tilting lance of Montgomery cut short his days, but Nicole de Savigny was good enough for the Marquise. Her lineage confirmed, Jeanne was forever rescued from the care of Jossel and her Sardinian.

Madame de Boulainvilliers did not, however, allow her first pleasurable amazement touching her find to

betray her into extravagant philanthropy or extensive benefactions. She placed her atom of royalty, a beautiful child once cleansed and healed of her cuts and bruises, in a pension in Passy conducted by a worthy bourgeois named Leclerc, and kept her there until the time of her first Communion, impressing well upon her mind the magnitude of the good fortune that had befallen her and the necessity for gratitude therefor. At fourteen Jeanne, slightly disillusioned, was placed in service as waiting maid in various households, a measure calculated to purge her nature of any inclinations towards pomp of circumstance, until her eighteenth year found her, in her benefactress's eyes, a modest unassuming girl fitted to make some honest gentleman happy and to perpetuate only the virtues of a once kingly line. Madame Boulainvilliers, deceived by externals, was, in point of fact, grievously mistaken in her charge.

Jeanne in her young womanhood was, to begin with, far too comely to be unassuming. Her hair, auburn and wavy, was superb above large and admirably expressive blue eyes. Dark, delicately arching eyebrows emphasized a dazzling whiteness of complexion and a straight proud little nose interpreted the pride of her lineage. A contemporary records that the only fault in her beauty was a mouth too ample for classic perfection, but her lips were delicious, rubid, soft, capable of an enchanting

and poignant smile and infinitely tempting in repose. She was small, but the development and beauty of her body, its soft lithe grace, defied a negligible stature, and men turned to observe her on the streets, startled, then delighted and vaguely regretful. Of all of this she was perfectly conscious and her modesty possessed limits. Taken into the household of Madame de Boulainvilliers at sixteen, and delivered from menial service, she had not delayed in devoting the next two years to training by constant usage the gifts given to her by God and the Valois. As she grew older the royal name she bore came to possess for her more and more significance and indeed it was her only heritage. Realizing this, her protectress engaged to have her genealogy officially certified by D'Hozier de Sérigny, king-at-arms to the French nobility, and by Chérin, genealogist to the King. This was achieved on May 6, 1776, and the definite authentication gained for her a yearly pension of eight hundred livres from the royal coffers, by virtue of an order issued on December 9, of the same year. About this time Jeanne was placed in the boarding-school of the Abbey of Yerres, an institution not far removed from Montgeron, an estate of the Marquis de Boulainvilliers, and her education was given its final luster. In March 1778, she was confided to the Abbey of Longchamp, and considered by Madame la Marquise to be thoroughly, even

excellently, equipped to win fortune and happiness from existence. The great lady considered that she had, in salvaging the girl from misery, not only saved her life, and given her a better one, but had for herself laid up much wealth in Heaven. Doubtless this latter belief was justified. Jeanne herself was some years later to consider that her salvation and its attendant benefits had wrought her eventual downfall. It was all that name Valois, she deposed, that cursed name Valois. Had she never been rescued from the filth of her family bondage, and the sadistic pleasures of her mother and her mother's paramour, her sinful pride in her name would never have compassed her ruin and that of a number of others. "Alas, I said to myself, why am I an issue of the blood of the Valois. O! fatal name, it is you who opened my soul to that pride which should never have found a place therein; it is because of you that I shed tears; it is to you that I owe my misfortunes." Cynically, her judges, in the latter hour of her discomfiture, considered that all this might indeed be so but that even if it was it did not excuse her.

The fact remains, however, that her name did serve to augment in the girl's consciousness an already formidable arrogance and unrest of spirit. Bidden in January 1779, to the marriage of Madame de Boulainvilliers' daughter, Mademoiselle de Jassy, to the Viscount Gas-

pard-Paulin de Clermont-Tonnerre, she beheld in the brave show of silks and satins, jewels and laces that attired the fashionable company assembled, precisely the fashion of life she felt herself made for, due to her indeed, and she desired no other. She was young, she was beautiful, the blood of monarchs, of Francis I, to name the most impressive, flowed, a hot wine, in her veins, but nevertheless on the day following the wedding she was packed off again to her convent. She went, figuratively speaking, howling, and when the lady abbess, instructed thereto by Madame de Boulainvilliers, came to sound her as to her inclination towards becoming a nun she received a welcome that dismayed her. A day or so later, in the first week of February 1779, Jeanne fled the abbey with a bundle of clothing under her arm and twelve francs in her pocket, to take lodgings in Bar-sur-Aube, explaining by letter to her benefactress that she had engaged to recover the properties of her family, Fontette, d'Essoyes and de Verpillières. She received no reply and it is probable that she expected none. Ungrateful as her conduct may appear, it cannot fail to be regarded as courageous in a girl of 23 without friends or means beyond those afforded by a strict if generous noblewoman and a diminutive pension.

Fortunately at Bar she encountered good fortune in the person of a provincial lady addicted to titles who

offered her shelter immediately on hearing that she was of noble, actually royal, birth. Madame de Surmont, wife to the President Surmont, kept a large and hospitable house filled continually with young folk and Jeanne, invited to pass one night, passed 360, so well did she employ her charms upon her host and hostess. She met a number of eligible young provincials, danced with them, flirted with them, singled out the least admirable of them and of course played the fool with him, so much so that she had to marry him too speedily for decorum. On the 6th of June, 1780, Nicolas de la Motte, equerry, king's guard in the company of the Burgundians, and Jeanne de Saint-Remy of Luz and of Valois, were married in the parish church of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine at Bar-sur-Aube, in the august and somewhat angry presence of the groom's maternal uncle, Nicolas-Clausse de Surmont, king's counselor, president, provost, civil and criminal judge of Bar-sur-Aube, lieutenant-general of police and president of the salt cellar (grenier à sel), and divers other worthies among whom were not to be found the ladies of Boulainvilliers and of Surmont. A word or two suffices to describe La Motte. Two years Jeanne's senior, he had reached the age of twenty-six without otherwise distinguishing himself than by accumulating a large number of debts, seducing one or two milkmaids and wearing with passable

distinction the scarlet uniform of his fellowship surmounted with a bold-appearing cloak of the same hue, and all set off by a silver-bordered hat cocked with white. He was dull of mind and spirit, not overly scrupulous, ridiculously extravagant, vicious and penniless. Fascinated by the demoiselle of Valois, he had plied his suit stubbornly and at last had managed to catch a physically passionate and love-starved girl off her guard. The result for her was tragic. By marrying the lout she saved a little of her honor but destroyed her prospects to become, as she had longed to do, a great lady. With rare courage and philosophy she accepted the lot for which she had, certainly, only herself to blame, and set about reconstructing a whole new theory of life. She had sought to achieve fortune legitimately; now, if need be, she would seek to achieve it by any means whatsoever. Her marriage was the turning-point of her career. Had she resisted a minute's sensual invitation, fled from the clamorous inclination of her body, she would never, it is quite possible, have conducted the intrigue that, in the eyes of France, was to ruin the public credit of a great queen. From 1780 onwards Jeanne is the enemy of society, a pirate seeking to prey upon it, an individual to whom right and wrong are idle, unmeaning terms. As a matter of fact she seems to have been born with an undeveloped moral sense so that, in her

own estimation, her conduct was never in any wise reprehensible.

If the newly-married pair had expected to honeymoon in the house where they had first met they were grievously mistaken. Madame de Surmont, outraged by what she very properly considered an insult to her house, treated the bride in not too privy a fashion as a rank harlot and the groom as little more than a stud beast and begged them both to quit the shelter of her roof. Silently they did so and since they had no other place, La Motte introduced his wife to cantonment life in the castle of Lunéville where was gathered his company of the king's guards, and there she remained a demoralizing influence until, of her own accord, she entered the convent "des Annonciades" at Saint-Nicolas-du-Port in Lorraine. This convent, an old one and very rich, restricted its novices to noblewomen, but since it had been founded by that Jeanne of Valois who was the daughter of Louis XI, our Jeanne, adroitly making use of her maiden name, gained admission. La Motte went back to his bachelor's life, a prolonged debauch, until his wife had matured a plan of campaign. He realized very sensibly that his livelihood was to depend thereafter upon the wits of a woman.

Jeanne, herself, living in a certain luxurious austerity in the company of ladies of rank, was content to rest

a while, quietly, rid of her husband and the necessity to scheme, but news reached her ears that made it imperative to seize opportunities to further her fortunes. In September 1781, Madame de Boulainvilliers passed through Strasbourg in Lorraine upon her way to visit one of the greatest noblemen in France and in Europe, the Cardinal Prince Louis of Rohan, a family so puissant, wide-flung and distinguished, that its members owned only lip-service to the Bourbons and with the Princes of Lorraine followed in matters of precedence immediately after the princes of the blood. The Rohans had come into France in 1491 with the Duchess Anne of Brittany, to which lady they owed fealty and kindredship, were related to the Valois through Catherine of Rohan, wife to the Count of Angoulême, forbear of the first Francis, and to the Bourbons through one of their ladies who was married to the Duke d' Albret, King of Navarre, grandfather of Henry IV. The princely houses of Soubise and Marsan boasted blood-relationship and so glorious had they always deemed themselves that their motto thus superbly proclaimed them: "Roy ne puis, Prince ne daigne, Rohan je suis." Prince Louis, born in 1734, had been named at twenty-six coadjutor of the Bishop of Strasbourg and Bishop in partibus of Canope. At twenty-seven he was elected to the Academy of France and at thirty-eight went as ambassador to the

court of Maria Theresa of Austria, a mission of singular importance which he prosecuted with an air of such extravagant and frivolous charm that he earned the undying hatred of that strait-laced queen, a passion passed on with tragic results to her daughter, Marie-Antoinette, Queen of France. As ambassador Prince Louis, possessed of a gigantic personal fortune and tastes comparable to those of the later Cæsars, may have lacked something of tact in his dealings with the imperious, narrow-minded queen-dowager but the Austrian nobility adored him to an individual and when he was recalled wore his likeness upon their fingers, fixed in jewels in the circles of rich rings. Maria-Theresa and afterwards her daughter, judged him frivolous, meretricious and an influence to be deplored. They were wrong and the daughter was punished for her mistake. Prince Louis was, though gullible, in reality an intellectual, a wit, brilliant but kindly, a scholar of parts though credulous, and as a man generous to the point of folly, easily touched and as a consequence easily duped by those who pled their woes before him. He was, it is quite true, miscast as a servant of God and a great officer of the Church but his position was more temporal than spiritual in an institution that had clothed a Riario, a Borgia, and a Dubois in the scarlet of the blood of Christ. Debonair and gay, tall, and en-

dowed with a beauty almost womanly, he was known, after his accession to the cardinalate, as "le bel Eminence" and though he had enemies, these hated him from jealousy, and his friends far outmatched them in influence and importance. At the time when at Saverne he held a court but a little less gorgeous than the king's own and when Madame de Boulainvilliers went to visit it, Louis was Grand Almoner of France and had ambitions to be an even more powerful personage. Nothing barred his way save the enmity and distrust of his queen, an enmity fostered during her lifetime by her mother and a distrust that had no justification whatever save idle scandals, circulated when she was still Dauphiness, touching words that he had never spoken concerning her. Louis, guileless to a degree in all human relationships, grieved and puzzled over his mistress's disfavor and for it could find no reasonable explanation or cause. At Saverne in 1781 he divided his days between child-like audience of Cagliostro, at that time in the prime of his unmatched powers as a charlatan and mountebank, and sorrow at the hardness of heart of a princess for whom he entertained nothing but the deepest and most respectful admiration. Madame de Boulainvilliers, in the position of an old and cherished friend, was his confidante though capable of little else but sympathy, for the Marquise had not the ear of the

Queen or of Madame Campan, her reader and close friend. The Prince's household, then, at the time when Jeanne became cognizant of its inclusion of her benefactress, presented, for that of a prince of the church, a sufficiently diverting spectacle. Louis himself, in turn distrait and agog with amazement as Cagliostro spun his sublime fables, Madame de Boulainvilliers, tender and understanding with him, a little shocked by the conduct of his Rosicrucian-alchemist-immortal, and finally Cagliostro himself. This last appeared in 1781 to be about forty years of age, was short and thickset, bull-necked and brown, with black eyes of an astonishing brilliance, noticeably full, and a brow growing a little bald. He went habitually clad in a suit of taffeta, with stockings spangled with gold and shoes buckled with precious stones. Over a waistcoat wonderfully beflowered rippled a watch-chain of gold sprigged with diamonds, at one end of which were fixed six large diamonds and four branches of diamonds to two of which in turn were attached diamond tassels, to the third a golden key garnished with diamonds, and to the fourth an agate seal. In weather fair or foul he wore a musketeer's hat crowned with white plumes, and a neckerchief sumptuously frilled with rare lace in which lived the pale fire of more diamonds. Diamonds and rubies enriched his stumpy and undistinguished fingers. It might be said

that he was set with diamonds in his taffeta and when he walked abroad it was with a tail of admirers and a cut-purse or two, speculative and hopeful. He dispensed liquors that sheared from one's life a quarter of a century, or fixed one forever at whatever age one found oneself at its quaffing, and serious journals recorded these miracles with hushed and solemn emphasis. He professed himself an adept in the rites of the ancient Egyptian priests and he possessed the secrets of universal medicine. He wished to restore the freemasonry of the Nilotic civilizations and understood perfectly the use of the philosopher's stone, which he held in his possession, and with which he could transmute all impure metals into gold. Observing a crucifix he would fall into a fit of admiration that a woodcarver of the eighteenth century, unblessed with a personal acquaintance with the Christ, could so cleverly reproduce His features and in a silence of amazement would remark sadly that, strolling on the damp sands bordering the lake of Tiberias, he had many times advised the Saviour against the imprudence of His preachings. "Oh, yes, His voice was infinitely sweet, poignant, melodious, but He gathered about Him, against my advice, a band of ragged fishermen and thieves and insisted upon the dissemination of His doctrines." The immortal would interject a sigh. "Evil came of it." Turning to his valet he would ques-

tion him gloomily. "Do you remember the night in Jerusalem when they crucified the Christ?" "No, Master. My master has forgotten that I have been with him for only fifteen hundred years."

This preposterous fellow with his jargon of guarantees concerning eternal health of soul and body, and infinite wealth, possessed the entire confidence of the Cardinal Prince and in Paris numbered princes of the blood royal among his partisans. Houdon has left us his likeness in marble and even Casanova, urgently skeptical, remarked that his nonsense was sublime. At Saverne in 1781 he was the guest of honor, constantly on the point of creating gems from pebbles, peering into crystals, intoning sonorous balderdash and invoking archangels and Rosicrucian patrons ordinarily static in the heavenly hierarchy. Louis, credulous as a babe, owned him to be his master and genuflected at his passing.

Jeanne, quitting her convent and rejoining the flatulent La Motte, gradually growing sober, drove like a beagle on the trail of her benefactress and with protestations of repentance and loud sorrow bayed her in the very anteroom of the Rohan palace. In an ill day for her noble friend, Madame de Boulainvilliers took the girl and her husband back into favor and recommended them to the good offices of Prince Louis. Cagliostro, less trusting, observed the couple narrowly and looked to it

that they did not too thoroughly insinuate themselves into the confidence of his Eminence, a business that earned him the girl's most fervent hatred, but he was unable to prevent the Cardinal from securing for La Motte a captaincy in the dragoons of Monsieur, the King's brother. Madame de Boulainvilliers for her part paid the debts accumulated by the young couple in Lunéville, an office that gained the bridegroom a certificate of service from the King's Constabulary and allowed him to repair to Paris, ostensibly in the train of Louis of Rohan. This was in the early days of December 1781.

The La Mottes reached Paris, installed themselves in quarters far from sumptuous both in that city and at Versailles, where Jeanne intended to intrench herself, and looked forward confidently to receiving further benefits from Madame de Boulainvilliers and his Eminence. They had not long been in residence, however, when the news reached them of the former's death, prematurely, at one and fifty, in the prime of a life given over almost entirely to good works and charitable performance. She was widely mourned and by none more sincerely than by the beautiful lady in the "Belle Image" hostel, Place Dauphine, in Versailles. Jeanne, who, since her marriage, had resolutely placed sentiment behind her, yielded for the last time to a genuine emo-

tion and wept bitterly and long. In the end, perhaps, she mourned more the lady's kindnesses in her behalf than the lady herself, but for a time at least, Madame de Boulainvilliers' death was a great bereavement. But the emotion was soon quenched and in its place an anxiety arose. Jeanne saw that her acquaintance with Rohan must now bear definite fruit and that promptly. She besieged the Hôtel de Rohan in the street called Vieille-du-Temple with ceaseless importunities and received a number of small sums from the Cardinal's major-domo, an astute man; five or six louis here and there and now and again a dozen or so of some wine of merit, but no more. In Versailles and Paris Prince Louis was otherwise occupied than at Saverne. Jeanne, with a definite end in view, that of recovering the lost estates of her family, Fontette, d'Essoyes, and de Verpillières, sought larger benefactions. Daily at court, standing on tiptoes to observe the passing from levées of her Majesty, she absorbed the gossip of the royal anterooms, tales of the anger of the Queen with the Cardinal and the anguish of the Cardinal at the Queen's unjustifiable disfavor. Pondering, and, her conclusions reached, illimitably daring, she made her plans. To create an atmosphere of intimacy with personages of position about the Queen she stood once or twice in a great press of people lining the walk usually taken by her Majesty, and as Marie-

Antoinette passed by, swooned effectively away at her feet. This ruse proved successful once and lackeys were bidden to carry her tenderly to an anteroom and to send her away comfortably imbursed. The second time the Queen failed to observe her and the third time ladies in attendance marked her as an intriguante and saw to it that she had no profit from her swooning. But she had what she wanted. The Queen had spoken words if not actually to her, at any rate concerning her. Three years passed during which she built up a little following of petty nobles and adventurers with some pretensions to breeding and influence, among them a certain Rétaux de Villette, representative of a familiar type, sleek, personable in an unvirile manner, perfectly cowardly, who posed in her drawing-rooms as her secretary and collaborator, carrying the latter office even unto her bed if contemporaries are to be believed. When the time was judged ripe, in April 1784, she bade Rétaux prepare to inscribe to some purpose and dispatched Deschamps, her husband's valet, to a perfumer's shop in Saint Anastase Street or to a stationer in that of the Franc-Bourgeois to buy a white laid note-paper bordered with light blue and bearing in one corner the lily of France.

However felonious and ill-applied, the girl's courage in this matter is worthy of note. Her consequent actions in regard to Prince Louis, one of the greatest noblemen

in Europe and by none believed to be more than normally credulous, are even more remarkable. Rétaux taking her dictation, she proceeded to create a correspondence between Marie-Antoinette, Queen of France, and her cousin, Jeanne de Luz and de Valois, Countess de la Motte (La Motte had no right whatsoever to the title of count, but had he thought he could avoid detection he would have masqueraded as a duke or even a prince royal), in which the latter pled the case of the Cardinal of Rohan and the former very graciously allowed herself to be persuaded touching his great qualities and devoted loyalty. She then, with the intrepid confidence of the true gambler, secured an audience with Rohan and disclosed the good news and her felicitous intervention in his behalf. It is idle to animadvert on the simplicity of a mind that would entertain convictions in regard to the genuineness of such a correspondence. It suffices that Louis believed her and at his trial observed that he did so because above all other things in life he desired to give credence to what she told him. The absurdity of a great queen writing in such a vein and by her own hand to an unknown, insignificant adventuress seems never to have struck him. He became on the instant radiant as a child with a long desired toy and Jeanne returned homewards with her lost family estates, in her mind's eye, practi-

cally recovered. She informed Rohan that the Queen wished his justification in writing. He gave it after devoting days to the task and completing numberless draughts. In reply he received the following absolution: "I am charmed to find you guilty no longer. I cannot yet give you the audience you desire. When circumstances permit me to I will send you word. Be discreet." Rohan was in the seventh heaven. Jeanne told him that at her suggestion the Queen would seal her forgiveness of him by a nod as she passed a certain window of the palace. He watched from that window and so frantic was the man become that he actually believed that he saw her incline for a brief moment her head. The Cardinal was ready for the slaughter. Incredibly, monstrously deluded, he was in Jeanne's hands.

She went further, much, much further. She found in some obscure quarter of Paris, a beautiful but stupid girl named Marie-Nicole Leguay who had the misfortune to bear an amazing likeness to Marie-Antoinette. Jeanne made a friend of her, re-christened her the Baroness D'Oliva, anagram of her own name Valois, and one day asked her if she would do her a great favor. Why not, for such a noble and beautiful patroness? What could it be? Why, nothing much. Merely to await a great nobleman in a shadowy bypath in the gardens

of the royal palace at Versailles, give him a letter, enunciate a single phrase, and return. The Oliva was easily persuaded.

For the Cardinal the ensuing play, comedy for Jeanne, was one day to prove an appalling and shameful farce. Near the grove of Venus * in the gardens of Versailles, he waited, heavily mantled, ministered to by the last Valois. The night was completely dark. There shone no moon or stars. Only the fountains broke the silence, chattering sadly to themselves in hidden thickets. Pines and cedars, firs, limes and elms lifted an impenetrable canopy of leaves above him and against the wall that supported the stairs of the Hundred Steps. One came, then two persons, one a lady, whose dress even in the darkness appeared familiar to his Eminence—the dress worn by the Queen in the famous portrait by Vigée-Lebrun in the salon of '83. Louis of Rohan advanced a step, knelt and kissed its hem. Into his hand was thrust a note and he heard, or so he believed, an enchanting voice murmur, "You may hope that the past is forgotten." The first figure, having disappeared, returned violently. "Quick! Quick! Come! Here are Madame and Madame d'Artois." His Eminence, attended still by Jeanne, withdrew, and the lady and her attendant likewise. The play was over. The dramatis personæ, besides

* Now the Queen's Grove.

Rohan and La Valois, were, of course, Rétaux, the Oliva and La Motte. Such was one of the most notorious and brutal hoaxes in history. And for the Cardinal Prince, the worst was yet to come.

Jeanne did not delay in following up the success of this mummery. She represented to his Eminence that the Queen desired a loan of fifty thousand francs in order to aid a family of poor but deserving gentlefolk. Flattered that he should have been thus placed in confidence, Louis borrowed it from the Jew Cerf-Beer. Jeanne bought therewith a sumptuous residence at Bar-sur-Aube and a charming little villa at Charonne, to be utilized for picnics and rural junketings. She then wrought one of her little royal missives and Rohan departed for Saverne at the instance, so he believed, of his queen. In his absence, the lodgings in the street of Neuve-Saint-Gilles whither the La Mottes had removed, became astonishingly gay. More moneys were solicited and received from the Cardinal, large sums that were squandered in absurd luxuries or expended on the demesne at Bar. There were dances and soirées at which La Motte played upon the harp, Rétaux sang bergerettes in his tenor voice so high that it might have belonged to one of the papal castrati, and Jeanne went from guest to guest, charming, sympathetic, radiant, clad in rose silk that left her smooth white shoulders

bare and was distinguished by a decolletage so valiant that it betrayed more than the snowy beginnings of her breasts. These were her greatest days. Relieved temporarily from the stress of poverty she spent like a true Valois, sought to do no wickedness and even attempted in a small way to make amends for her past iniquities by stating to her buffooning husband that thenceforward there would be no more swindling. He dared not laugh in her face.

Her relapse inspired the preface to the cause célèbre of the century.

It included in a devastating cocoon of intrigues Charles-Auguste Böhmer and Paul Bassenge, jewelers to their Royal Majesties, stout Saxon merchants famed throughout the world for the wealth and integrity of their concern with its offices and shops in Vendôme Street in the city of Paris. It included, as scapegoat of course, Prince Louis, his Eminence the Cardinal Rohan, the soi-disant Count de la Motte, Rétaux de Villette the pimping secretary, and his mistress, Jeanne de Luz and de Valois, Countess de la Motte. It included also, and as principal, Josèphe Jeanne Marie Antoinette of the imperial family of Habsburg, daughter of the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, and Queen of France. In a lesser degree it enveloped Louis XVI and Giuseppe Balsomo, self-styled Alessandro, Count di Cagl-

iostro, magician extraordinary to his Highness of Rohan. These formed the cast. Prologue, action and epilogue, the first two brief and admirable in their simplicity, constitute a tragedy wonderfully unified and effective. Böhmer, the jeweler, and Bassenge his partner, had for many years previous to 1785 been slowly amassing the best known and most valuable diamonds in the world. It had originally been their intention to sell the matchless necklace formed by these to King Louis XV for his mistress, Jeanne-Bénéditte Vaubernier, Countess du Barry, but the King died of a disease sucked from the feverish lips of an inmate of the seraglio in the Parc-aux-cerfs and no one else held the du Barry to be worth one million six hundred thousand livres. Böhmer, sorely disappointed, sent the design of the necklace to the Court of Spain but there too the price terrified. In 1774 he had offered it to Louis XVI for his Queen and the good soul would have bought it had not his wife refused to accept a bauble so unutterably dear. Böhmer was willing to make terms for its payment but the Queen again refused, saying nobly to King Louis that France had more need of a ship of war than of a jewel. The prices of both commodities were the same. The jeweler was struck with panic. He owed money, 800,000 livres, to the treasurer of the Marine, Baudard de Saint-James, who had aided him to purchase some

of the gems. By 1785, after another failure to persuade Marie-Antoinette in 1777, he was desperate. To Louis-François Achet, Procurator General of Petitions, he said woefully that though he had in his possession the greatest diamonds in the world, including the one once worn in the turban of the Grand Mogul and lost by the last great duke of Burgundy, Charles the Bold, at Granson, all the good that they were likely to do him was to enable him to sink the swifter when he threw himself into the Seine. Now Achet had a son-in-law, one Laporte, often a visitor in the street of Neuve-Saint-Gilles, and to his son-in-law he repeated this, who in turn mentioned it to Jeanne de la Motte. He added that he had seen the necklace and that it had not its equal in all the good round earth. Jeanne's relapse thereupon occurred without further ado. She went to Böhmer, inspected the jewels and observed that they would be very shortly purchased by a great noble but that she herself was to have no part in the transaction and would accept no commission. On January 4th, 1785, Prince Louis returned to Paris from Saverne. On the 24th, convinced by Jeanne that the Queen wished him to purchase the necklace in her behalf, he gave Böhmer audience, inspected the gems, wondered that so perceptive a woman as the Queen could favor such a massive design, and closed the bargain. The bill of sale and guaranty he re-

ceived from the jeweler by Jeanne's hand and found each detail of the proposed method of payment approved and below, the signature, "Marie-Antoinette de France." Afterwards the Cardinal wondered why he had not detected the false note in such a signature. "De France" forsooth! But he was a man lost. On February 1st he received the necklace, heard from Jeanne that the Queen awaited it with impatience, informed Böhmer of the identity of his illustrious customer and drove to Versailles, the precious casket in the possession of his valet, a staunch soul named Schreiber. At the Place Dauphine Jeanne admitted him to a room with an alcove into which he withdrew when the Queen's emissary arrived. Rohan recognized him. He had given the warning on the night of the rendezvous in the Grove of Venus. Rétaux of course. The casket changed hands, passed from the Cardinal to Jeanne, from Jeanne to the emissary. The latter departed, preceding Louis, who went back to Paris thoroughly satisfied. Jeanne's state of mind may be imagined.

Three hours later in the Street of Neuve-Saint-Gilles, blinds drawn and doors bolted, the necklace of the Queen was being wantonly hacked apart with a kitchen knife and the individual jewels stowed away until they might be sold.

Rétaux undertook to dispose of some of these on Feb-

ruary 9th. On the 15th he was arrested with a pocket full of diamonds. Released since there was no charge against him, Jeanne dispatched him to try his hand in Holland. La Motte went to London, to William and Robert Gray of New Bond Street, that city's foremost jewelers, and Nathaniel Jefferys in Piccadilly, and offered huge jewels at such an absurdly low price that the English merchants suspected theft. And they noticed that some of the stones were slightly damaged as though they had been hacked by a heavy blade. This was in April. In May and June acquaintances in Paris and at Bar-sur-Aube were aware that Madame de la Motte had at last struck it very rich indeed. Six horses and twelve carriages were housed in the stables of the great house at Bar; a regiment of servants incredibly liveried, a negro clothed all in silver, precious plate, costly furniture and rare stuffs, a trousseau such as the Queen herself did not possess, and rings upon the hands of the mistress and master of all this that blinded the eyes, all this poured into Bar and startled Paris, and on everything flared the motto, "Rege ab avo sanguinem, nomen et lilia." It was astounding. Even Rétaux went habited like a Crœsus. More courageous than her lover or her husband and far cleverer, Jeanne had disposed of her share of the diamonds and this was the fruit.

But those who held it had it not long for the eating.

Böhmer and Bassenge expected an installment for the necklace, 400,000 livres, on August 1st. On July 10th, prompted by Jeanne, Rohan told them that the Queen desired a reduction of 200,000 livres and added that he personally wished them to thank her Majesty for her kindness in their behalf. On July 12th Böhmer was at Versailles on the Queen's business and left with Madame Campan a missive of profound gratitude. The Queen made nothing of it, burnt it, and briefly wondered if the jeweler had at last gone mad. August 1st passed with no payment. On the third Böhmer and Bassenge gave tongue and Jeanne, cornered by both them and the Cardinal, achieved a master stroke. To the jewelers she calmly observed: "You have been deceived, the bill of sale and guaranty held by the Cardinal bears a forged signature, but the Prince is rich enough, he will pay." In absolute terror Böhmer, fearful of offending a great nobleman, went straightway to Versailles and was informed by Madame Campan that his worst fears were realized and that he had been completely swindled. The Queen had received no necklace.

That same day Jeanne gave Rétaux 4000 francs and bade him fly. The hunt was up. She herself, fooling Rohan to the top of his bent, begged sanctuary from him that night and the next, then went to Bar-sur-Aube, confident that the Cardinal, rather than expose her

part in the great deception and cast an unwelcome publicity upon his Queen, would himself pay the merchants. And there seems to be little doubt but that he would have done just this had not Böhmer in his timidity raised the alarm at Court.

On August 15th the while at Bar Jeanne passed from gayety to gayety, Rohan was summoned to the Queen. By now apprised of what had befallen him, he went sadly but full of courage. The interview, swelled by the royal presence of Louis XVI, went badly and then worse. The king spoke first.

"Cousin, what is this acquisition of a diamond necklace which you have made in the name of the Queen?"

Rohan blenched but his voice was firm.

"Sire, I see that I was deceived but I myself have not deceived."

The Queen, it is possible, sniffed.

"If this is so, Cousin, you need not be anxious. But explain—"

Prince Louis looked miserably at the woman whose favor he had fondly believed he had possessed for more than a twelvemonth. More beautiful than ever, she stood, her head high, her eyes hard as the gems he had bought in her name, crushing him with disdain. He shuddered and his hand shook as he fingered the chain

at his neck. The King was distressed. Rohan was an aging man and at the moment he looked very old and very frail.

"Write what you have to tell me, Cousin." He passed into his library with the Queen and his two councilors, Miromesnil and Breteuil, the latter an old enemy of his Eminence.

Prince Louis wrote fifteen lines of an explanation pitifully jumbled, commencing with the words "A woman that I believed—" and ending with the name "Madame La Motte de Valois."

The King read it.

"Where is this woman?"

"Sire, I do not know."

"Have you the necklace?"

"It is in that woman's hands."

Louis XVI bade him await him a few minutes in the cabinet and then reappeared with the Queen, the Keeper of the Seals and Breteuil. This last read aloud the Cardinal's scrawled memoir.

"Where are these pretended notes of authorization, written and signed by the Queen, which are mentioned in the memoir?"

"Sire, I have them. They are false."

"I believe you, they are false."

"I will bring them to your Majesty."

"And this letter which you wrote to the jewelers, of which is mention also made in the memoir?"

"Sire, I do not recall having written it, but I must have if they have it. I will pay for the necklace."

For a moment there was silence.

The King made an abrupt gesture with his hands.

"I cannot avoid, Sir, in such a situation, placing seals upon your effects and making sure of your person. The Queen's name is precious to me. It is compromised, I must neglect nothing."

Marie-Antoinette bent her fine brows very slightly. Breteuil was frankly jubilant. Rohan bowed. Very briefly he pled the honor of his name, of that of his near relation Madame de Marsan who had cared for the king in his infancy, of that of the Soubise, princely supporters of the royal house. The King, always accessible to genuine emotion, wavered, but the Queen checked the threatened clemency. In a voice almost stridulent, packed with her own and her mother's grievances, she made interjection.

"How is it possible, Sir Cardinal, that you could have believed that I, who have not for eight years addressed one word to you, would have made use of your services to conclude the purchase of the necklace?"

She wept.

Restored to his first purpose, the King became at once granitic.

"I will do my best, Sir, to console your relatives. I hope that you will be able to justify yourself. I am doing what I should do as a king and as a husband."

It was Assumption day. Louis of Rohan wore the scarlet of his office and had come prepared to celebrate the requisite mass at the palace. Before having entered, at the instance of the King, the inner cabinet, he had waited in the anterooms with his peers, the great nobles of the kingdom, the "grandes entrées" who awaited royal audience. The great rooms, the council chamber, galleries, corridors, were crowded with all his world when Rohan appeared at the door of the cabinet, Breteuil, purple with ignoble joy, behind him. The subdued roar of conversation ceased very suddenly. All turned. Breteuil lifted his right hand and his face, wrinkled so that it leered like a Greek mask, was disgusting to look upon.

"Arrest the Cardinal!"

The Duke of Villeroi, captain of the King's bodyguard, gave a spasmodic smile. It was incredible.

Haggard and white but with a port still firm and proud, Prince Louis, Cardinal Rohan, Grand Almoner of France, walked his via dolorosa through the anterooms, the cabinet of the clock, the council-room, the

Chamber, the Bull's Eye and from there into the great gallery. The sun, pouring through the high windows, made the pallor of his face the more appalling above the scarlet of his pontifical robes. He paused. Villeroi beside him, still stunned, murmured an order, and a prince of the house of Rohan was arrested like any cut-purse.

At Bar-sur-Aube Jeanne heard the clamorous tidings as she sat to meat, and left table and company, shaking as though before her on the walls had appeared a sentence to death upon the scaffold. In the King's cabinet the shade of his ancestor, Louis the Magnificent, frowned in incredulous dismay at this dullest of the Bourbons. A public arrest made of a great noble, a collateral of the royal house. Discredit cast upon it, dirty linen washed in the delighted faces of the mob, esprit de corps and the clan loyalty of the aristocracy destroyed forever. The monarchy made a mock of, the church sullied and acknowledged corrupt. What madness, what stupidity!

Why not, in the name of Fouquet and Lauzun and the Man in the Iron Mask, a sealed letter, a secret apprehension, the Bastille or Pignerol, and the decent silence of a living tomb? But no! Louis XVI preferred a public arrest. The Revolution and the Reign of Terror, already conceived, waxed greater and leapt a little in the womb of France.

Jeanne, quitting Bar, reached Paris on August 20th at two o'clock in the morning, was arrested and taken to the Bastille. Brave as a lioness, she determined to ride out the storm and refused to leave France where she had at last acquired lands and fortune. Her husband, however, fled to England, whence, though he was zealously pursued, he was not brought back. Rétaux de Villette, plucked from shelter in Geneva, was not locked up until March 16th in the following year and the Oliva, poor stupid beauty, was seized also. Of the Cardinal's household were incarcerated Cagliostro and the chamberlain of his Eminence, Baron de Planta. The trial was ready to begin.

And here, again, Louis XVI blundered fatally. He refused Rohan's request of a private examination and delivered him, with the others accused, to trial by the French Parliament, a body popularly inclined and stubbornly inimical to the Queen. Even at court Rohan's cause, at first feebly supported, received more and more sustenance. De Rohan, Prince of Montbazon, Prince of Rohan, Archbishop of Cambrai, the Prince of Soubise, the Marsans and the great house of Condé, rallied to the Cardinal's support and the populace, at first joyful at his disgrace, soon made of him a martyr and in lampoons and ribaldries poured execration upon Marie-Antoinette. At the preliminary hearings the sympathy of the

authorities was plainly for his Eminence, the natural goodness and nobility of his character never failing to impress them. Cagliostro added immeasurably to his popularity. Each time he spoke the court-room roared with laughter.

But with Jeanne things went not thus.

Her examiners, men of integrity, could at first prove nothing against her, so remarkable for intelligence and resource was her defense. Indeed the celerity with which her mind constructed alibis, denials and countercharges betrayed a genius that, though unworthy, was admirable. She maintained that as Rohan's mistress, she was naturally the recipient of moneys. She cast discredit upon the testimony of the Oliva by naming her harlot and a wench to be bought for a handful of coppers. Cagliostro she overwhelmed with abuse in a terrible interview, called him an empiricist, a fakir alchemist, a dreamer upon the Philosopher's Stone and a false prophet. She ended by hurling into his face a bronze candlestick and falling into convulsions from which she recovered to bite in the neck the jailer who was carrying her in his arms back to her cell. In the end, however, the joint testimonies of the Oliva, and Rétaux who, quite consistently, betrayed her and told all he knew, convicted her without hope of escape. Screaming that

the secretary was a procurer of girls for her husband and a rat whom she had detected stealing from bureau-drawers, she refused finally to leave her cell and when the turnkeys came thither to conduct her, they found her lying naked upon her bed.

The defenses of all the prisoners were read, discussed and judged by May 29th, 1786. Parliament sat on the 30th to give audience to the accused. Joly de Fleury, Procurator General, superseded Seguier, Attorney-General, and prosecuted his Eminence with amazing virulence. Seguier, outraged, arose to deliver his opinion and after recommending that Rohan be acquitted, turned to Fleury.

"Ready to go down to the tomb, you wish to cover your ashes with ignominy and force the magistrates to share in it."

Fleury sneered openly.

"Your anger, Sir, does not surprise me. A confirmed libertine like yourself feels bound to espouse the Cardinal's cause."

Seguier paused; then, with his colleagues solidly in his favor, observed calmly:

"I sometimes see women of easy virtue. I even leave my coach at their doors. It is a private matter. But no one has ever seen me sell my opinion for favors."

This blow at the influence of the Court would have predisposed the assembly in Rohan's favor even if it had not already been of that mind.

Rétaux, suited in black silk, was the first to occupy the dock. In a graphic idiom, he "came clean."

Then appeared Jeanne, dressed modestly, but richly and in fashion, her beautiful face as hard as tinted ivory. She commenced by saying that she intended to speak about a great rogue (the Cardinal), lied hardily and ended by averring that the Queen had written two hundred times to Prince Louis, many letters giving him assignations. She retired with a series of curtseys, smiling mockingly, leaving the assembly shaken and mortally outraged.

The dock was removed.

Clad in violet, the mourning vestments of his rank, red cap and red shoes, a mantle of violet lined with red, and with the episcopal cross and the blue watered silk of the Order of the Holy Ghost about his neck, Prince Louis, the Cardinal of Rohan, came before the assembly. He was pale and his face was worn and the hair beneath the cap was whiter than of yore. He gave his testimony for two hours with dignity and nobility, and when he saluted the court upon retiring, to a man it rose to its feet. Even the high bench stood to accept his respect and to testify its own. Cagliostro and the Oliva followed,

the former convulsing the assembly by his sonorous nonsense and gorgeous gestures.

On May 31st the prisoners received sentence. Jeanne de Valois de Saint-Remy, Countess de la Motte and de la Pénicière, was unanimously condemned to be stripped naked and to be whipped by the executioner, to be branded with a V upon her beautiful shoulders, imprisoned for life in the Prison of the Salpêtrière and to have all her properties confiscated. Cagliostro and the Oliva were acquitted of all guilt and his Eminence of Rohan, after seventeen hours of debate between the factions of the Queen and the people, was voted likewise innocent by a plurality of 26 over 22 voices.

The crowds of Paris cheered the decisions to the echo and the Cardinal and his magician passed to their homes on a great wave of popular adulation and applause.

In Versailles the Queen wept with chagrin and long heads about the King beheld rust upon the scepter of the crown. Louis XVI put into execution far too late a royal order the very dating of which sealed its injustice. Rohan was bidden withdraw to his abbey of La Chaise-Dieu and did so gracefully, followed by the sympathy of Paris, the wits of which city thus punned upon his exile: "The Parliament purged him, the King sends him to the stool." In extenuation it may be observed that the abbey was known as "La Chaise" rather than "La

Chaise-Dieu." Cagliostro, too, was exiled, Rétaux fled to Venice, the Oliva married her lawyer to whom she had already borne a son in the Bastille. Only Jeanne remained, unrepentant, raging like a lioness, as the tumult died.

Retribution had caught up with her at last. This girl, sprung from the loins of a father whose debaucheries had destroyed an inherited nobility of inclination and position, bred up beneath the tyranny of a sadistic degenerate, rescued by a great lady and for a brief season at the very summit of fortune, possessed great qualities all of which she prostituted, traits and characteristics admirable in themselves which, misapplied and put in evil usage and operation, destroyed her. Jeanne was infinitely courageous, formidably intelligent, physically beautiful, generously, even nobly, mannered. Like her mother, La Jossel, however, she possessed not a vestige of moral sense. "Hinc," as the moralist might well remark, "hinc illæ lacrymæ."

Though rumor had it that the King would never allow her sentence to be carried out, the Procurator General set the date of her execution for the 19th of June. Every one, from the Duke of Crillon to the meanest commoner, sued for a place, a corner, an inch or two of window, from which to observe the scaffold before the Palace of Justice. The day came and went without ac-

tion. Fleury was in terror of a popular delivery since he well knew that it was the Queen and not the criminal that the pack ravened to tear. On June 21st, however, at five in the morning, Jeanne was awakened by her jailers, timidly, for these remembered the occasion of their announcement to her of the acquittal of the Cardinal. She had shattered a chamber pot against her face, so violent had been her rage, and had been convulsed for an hour. At first she refused to arise but consented finally to dress herself and to accompany them to the Court of May in the Palace. Here she probably received the first inkling of what was to come. She had not yet heard the sentence passed upon her. As she reached the portals of the court the executioners, colossal ruffians, fell upon her and bound her hands. At the foot of the great stone stairs M. Breton, recorder of Parliament, bade her go upon her knees to hear her sentence. She became pale as ashes. A scream so terrible that Breton himself turned gray, brought further exertion from the giants on either side of her. They forced her to her knees as she snapped at their hands like an animal, writhing in convulsions that appalled a handful of casual passers-by, for as public executions in Paris took place at midday, none else was present; it was barely six. As she struggled with such lithe and muscular violence, one of the executioners kicked her brutally behind the knees. Frothing, she

fell and was held until over her the words were read. As the recorder, enunciating those that dealt with the laceration with thongs of her naked flesh, withdrew one step, she turned her Medusine head and shrieked: "It is the blood of the Valois that you use thus," and to the shaken onlookers, "Will you allow them to treat thus the blood of your kings? Deliver me from my executioners." She fainted. Beyond the grill that barred the court from the public way, an odd two hundred onlookers had come together and milled like cattle, silent, too shocked for aught but a sort of horrified pity. Two guttersnipes clung to the carvings high on the walls and cried as Jeanne recovered consciousness to fight like a mad thing against the hands that stripped her. What followed was appalling. He who flogged was forced to strike her as she rolled upon the ground, followed her in grotesque unequal strides, and the blood followed the blows of the rods, though these were few and not heavy. Her body, exquisitely formed, was revealed nude to the gagging audience as her last garment was half torn from her shoulders by her own insensate struggles. As the white thighs and soft superb torso bent and twisted in the young sunlight, one who eight years hence was to gobble obscenities beside the guillotine, ejaculated a vile remark. The soft flesh sizzled very gently under the iron and a hair of blue smoke threaded away from beneath

it. Jeanne leapt like a great silver-white fish. Flung from her shoulder, the brand burnt again upon a breast.

She was lifted half swooning and summoned all her forces to bite one of the executioners in the arm.

Placed in a carriage from which she attempted to leap, she was driven back to the prison. Her wounds were bathed and she was clothed while she still swooned, but she came to herself to cry to one who would have bought her earrings for twelve livres, "Fool, that is barely the weight of the metal."

Two hours later placards were posted announcing the confiscation of all her effects and those of her husband, sentenced, if apprehended, to the galleys for life. The emprise of the last Valois was forever destroyed.

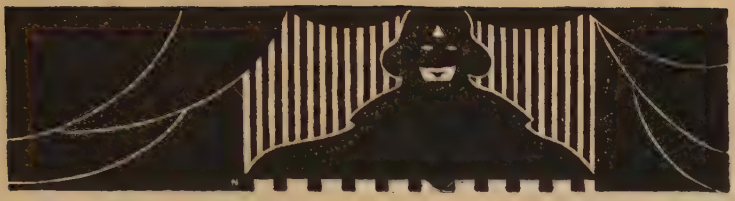
"Rege ab avo sanguinem, nomen et lilia!" "From the ancestral king I hold blood and name and lilies," to which she might have added "and the shame." The Valois, though royal, were never distinguished by posterity for honor or for deeds that might further the felicity of humanity. At least Jeanne had not upon her conscience the slaughter of the Vaudois or of the Bartholomew, though that matter which led to her downfall contributed to the destruction of a system of government and massacred a royal family. In a way she is greatly to be pitied, for she had in her being that which would have made a great soldier, a great warrior adventurer though

a mercenary, a Hawkwood, a constable of Bourbon, a Pietro Strozzi. Instead, by virtue of a bastard strain putrid with the foul corpuscles of the Jacquerie, she was flogged and branded in shame and nakedness.

So ended the play and the career of the descendant of a dozen kings of France.

Liberated by a secret authority in 1787, she fled to England where she met again with La Motte, saw evil days and worse in plenty, and at the latter end, leapt from the window of her poor lodgings in Lambeth in an attempt to escape from bailiffs, cried onto her by agents of the Duke of Orléans, and perished of her injuries. She was scarce forty. Of all gallant ladies or of all those who had it in them to be gallant, debonair and bright with that particular trenchant luster of blades of Damascus or Toledo, Jeanne de Saint-Remy de Luz and de Valois is the most tragic. And the tragedy lies in the fact that more than probably the sins visited upon her did not in her own character find their genesis.

STUDY OF AN ACTRESS



STUDY OF AN ACTRESS

Of adrienne lecouvreur, a great actress and a charming woman, it has been featly said that she "possessed all the virtues but virtue," a phrase which, carved as epitaph in bronze or marble, makes goodlier reading than many a more sanctimonious estimate, as, for example, "she possessed virtue but none of the virtues." When she was past caring, when the beautiful body and rich and vital mind were so much clay in the taut arms of Voltaire, the clergy of France beneath the Regency smacked their lips in pious ferocity and launched their last persecution, for though they trafficked briskly in Magdalens they loathed the clean candor of honest unrepentance. They refused absolution and Christian burial to one of the greatest women of the century, willed it that her body be flung upon the ground like that of any cur, and so encompassed their own eventual confusion and destruction. Two centuries after the death of the Lecouvreur, Bernhardt, with Clairon, Rachel and Réjane, her only peers in the history of the

French stage, passed to the Père Lachaise on the wave of an obsequial demonstration more familiar to the funerals of conquerors and kings, and placed a final period to the erasure of the French clergy's once inviolable edicts. One has here a study in progress throughout two hundred years, a study commenced in a deadly and not purely cerebral fury by the genius in whose arms the woman died. Voltaire's poems of protest upon her hideous burial and his subsequent lifelong campaign with its slogan of "écrasez l'infâme!" has tipped the balance in favor of the virtues and today, though one may deplore the absence of virtue, one does not scream for stones. Had the Lecouvreur died in 1923 instead of 1730, national grief and respect shown to her memory might well have surpassed those clamant at the funeral of the divine Sarah even though in a last lucid moment she might have indicated to a priest the bust of a lover as being the whole content of her adoration and belief.

France beneath the Regency of Orléans and the ministry of Cardinal Dubois, however, presented so curious an arrangement of contrasts that in England the House of Hanover and in Prussia that of Hohenzollern might well make mock of her society if not advantageously of her arms. In age, and swiftly failing, the Great Louis had beheld, with eyes once so unaccustomed to sorrow and reverses, son, grandson, great-grandson and yet an-

other grandson die in succession, and the heir to his kingdom in a child in whose future abilities he could feel no surge of confidence. With the death of the Great King, society, corseted in its freedoms during his last years by the influence of the Maintenon, returned gleefully to its ancient and scandalous diversions. The Regent Orléans was a miracle of depravity and though he did not seek to corrupt the boy-king, this last, a dull scholar in all things save vice, learnt this precociously and wonderfully well. If on his deathbed Louis XIV had harbored forebodings touching his kingdom and his successor, all these were justified. Debauchery and startling licentiousness went hand in hand with rank religious hypocrisy and persecution while Orléans and the unspeakable Dubois, Bourbon and Fleury ruled in turn from a Court once again become a brothel, a nation rotten with poverty and disease. Dying in that time, Adrienne Lecouvreur, an actress and therefore, in the eyes of the church, ipso facto, a harlot, might not be shriven or decently interred though such royally licensed prostitutes as the Montespan in an earlier day, Chateauroux and the Pompadour during the reign of Louis XV, flattered great clerics by asking them to dine and when they died, did so in an odor of sanctity that was almost smothering. Well might England who buried her Mrs. Oldfield with honor and respect, sneer at

France as an apple grown rotten on the bough, and Frederick William I, father of the Great Frederick, observe with almost ludicrous coarseness upon the character of her monarchs. Voltaire, whose life very nearly spanned the century, while acquiescing physically in its paradoxical morality, intellectually flayed its feculent hypocrisies and contradictions. Though, to be sure, it did not require his mind to perceive in the sanctimonious reception accorded the dead Pompadour, a woman without virtue or any of the virtues, a loathsome jest, when one recalled the passing of the Lecouvreur. Adrienne, first of the great French actresses, was for the same reason that caused her to achieve excellence in her art, quite unable to appreciate or understand the virtue of virtue. As she gave herself upon the stage of the Comédie so she gave herself upon the stage of life and there was no more nobility in the former gesture than in the latter. Between her type of Dame Galante, however, and that distinguished by the inclusion of such expensive strumpets as the Montespan, the Pompadour and the unconscionable Du Barry, there exists a wide difference. The latter were to an individual venial women, the former not at all. The former, like the pathetic La Vallière, gave because she loved, the latter because by what to themselves was an unimportant physical function, they might secure moneys

and luxurious unnecessaries. And then, too, Adrienne was a great artist, a notable intellect, a courageous, loyal and generous character, while the royal bawds were animal organisms with mental and spiritual equipments equivalent to those of a vixen fox. The actress, indeed, was a gallant lady and not, strictly, the French translation of that somewhat equivocal term. In fact, her life and career and death stamp her as being one of the most gallant ladies in history.

Born of an unpleasant woman in 1692 at Damery near Epernay, she was fathered by a hatter named Couvreur who, as he grew older, cherished singular and alarming delusions and abetted these by absorbing whole kegs of bad wine. The family, which also included a younger girl, was in Paris in 1702 and Adrienne, aged ten, bore the brunt of its continual quarrelings and violences. Her mother had a heavy hand, her father a heavier, when sober enough to use it, and her sister, though almost a nursling, seems to have possessed for her only a sort of vulpine affection which betrayed itself in crafty misdemeanors and attempts, usually successful, to escape punishment therefor by accusing her senior. Consequently the child was shrewdly beaten three or four times a day and emerged from early youth in a motley of bruises and a desperate depression. The death of her mother was a partial alleviation but added

so astonishingly to her father's derangement that Adrienne had moments when she hoped he too would be taken, a dispensation which ten out of twelve little girls would have prayed for thrice daily. She was awakened one night from her slumbers on the bare floor to find that her parent had lit fires in the four corners of the room and was seated in the middle of it singing obscene catches. He was with difficulty dragged to safety by interested neighbors and the fires extinguished, but of such interludes as this was Adrienne's childhood largely composed. She fled her home now and again to foregather with other children of the quarter with whom, with a sense of predestined authority rare in a child so dangerously abused, she engaged in theatricals, directing, acting, and managing, while pedestrians halted in the dirty street to applaud the inspired babies. She declaimed tattered and blowsy lyrics of questionable sentiment and iniquitous composition, while men and women listened, hearing not the words but the poignant little voice with its mastery of pathos, and its inflections that brought tears to eyes that were astonished to receive them. Before she was thirteen she led her troupe, every member of which was either of that age or younger, in rehearsals for the "Polyeucte" of the great Corneille, she herself playing Pauline and a passionate admirer of twelve ennobling the part of Sévère with a very gen-

uine sincerity. These rehearsals, conducted in the establishment of a pastry cook in Ferrou Street, caused some sensation in the neighborhood. Inhabitants of the district who had attended other of Adrienne's sidewalk productions, came and brought friends who cried "bis" and "quelle agonie splendide" in sincere emotion and astonishment as the drama progressed majestically upon the unities to its cadenced close. Word of all this reached the ears of Madame du Gué, wife to a president of Parliament whose rich and ancient hôtel invested in Guarancière Street the august environs of the Comédie Française itself. Madame du Gué, who was pleasant-minded, generous, and sympathetic to the arts, took coach and thrilled the pastry cook in Ferrou Street by attending "Polyeucte" in person, filling his odorous but shabby little kitchen with the magnificent liveries of her people and the genial encouragement of her plaudits. The play ended, she bade the heroine approach. Adrienne, still more Pauline than her own sad little self, did so, clothed in tragic dignity. Madame du Gué examined her with some attention through her glass.

"My child, I observe in you great qualities. I do not jest when I say that some day you will be as great as an actress as you will be unhappy as a woman."

She lifted the girl's chin with fingers that glittered in reds and greens and the hard blue flame of diamonds.

"When you have finished your rehearsals, I offer you my courtyard for the performance. My child, I wish you well."

She swept out and into her coach heralded by a marshaling of footmen and postillions, leaving the leading lady and the supporting cast of the Ferrou Street Stock Company in a state of mind akin to that of Balboa and his company before the vision of the Pacific.

Madame du Gué was as good as her word. Adrienne made her début, clad in the cast-off clothing of a serving-maid, in due time, and as the expression goes, "stole the show." The rendition of Corneille's lines seems to have been truly meritorious, for Madame du Gué, herself an onlooker from a salon window, wept without reticence while the cicisbeo of the moment forgot to ponder gallantries beyond her comely shoulders and gave audience enraptured. The house, so to speak, was packed for the opening, but for the second performance the quality of its content had greatly changed. The first had been largely of Ferrou Street, the second was almost entirely of that of Guarancière and even more noble quarters. Madame du Gué, who never hoarded her enthusiasms, flung this latest one upon the town that she knew, and society flocked to consider the gamine in "Polyeucte" and to applaud with small silver and even a little gold at its final curtain. After a frantic success

Adrienne withdrew the piece and aided by her patroness presented "Le Deuil" by the lesser Corneille. Ousted from the courtyard now completely taken over by the gentry, her first supporters overran the street and occasioned questions from the authorities of the Comédie Française who were repeatedly mystified by this phenomenon. What they learnt first astonished and then actively annoyed them. They represented to Madame du Gué that these performances held daily in her courtyard infected the air purified and rendered glorious by their presence in the vicinage of Guarancière Street and, in addition, they secured warrants for the arrests of the theatrical company presenting "Le Deuil." To the accompaniment of screams of ridicule from the great ladies witnessing the spectacle from the Du Gué salons, and shouts of derision from the gentlemen, colossal bailiffs laid hands upon the diminutive persons of the actors and actresses and would have hailed them away to jail. The tragedy of Thomas Corneille, thus converted into farce, was ripening once more towards tragedy again when Madame du Gué intervened. The year, the thirteenth of Adrienne's life, was 1705, a time when nobles still named themselves exempt from the law in its lesser phases, and the lady of a president of Parliament was more powerful than a magistrate's warrant. The bailiffs decamped but Madame du Gué judged it

wise to close her courtyard and she did so, recommending the troupers thus unstaged, however, to the good offices of an acquaintance, the Grand Prior of Vendôme. The Grand Prior, a merry man and a kind, placed an inclosure of the temple at their service and for two years the performances continued and then Adrienne, her vocation now definitely shown to her, received her opportunity.

She had an aunt who was a laundress. This aunt laundered for one Le Grand, a bad comedian but, as one might say, "bon maître," one who knew what should be done even though he himself might not possess the ability to do it. To Le Grand the good woman mentioned the astonishing gifts of her niece, a good girl though delicate and therefore not much use as a "blanchisseuse de fin" but endowed with a notable memory, the power to read, and a charming voice. Le Grand, mildly interested, one day remarked the child, quiescent among her aunt's tubs, and was strangely moved. Her little face, rather too long for an oval perfection, was framed in soft brown hair with lights, when the sun struck it, that were gorgeously rufous. She was small, but her slender body seemed full and pliant, and on tiny feet she went so softly and delicately that on the bare boards of the floor she walked as on a rug with a nap as rich as marsh sod. Her hands, too, were small,

slender and boned somehow in miniature, so that, as she gestured with them, they seemed to offer no resistance to the air. In the soft pallor of her face her eyes caressed one, or were proud without becoming hard, or denied access to her altogether without arousing anything but sorrow. Le Grand, "bon bourgeois buffon," was touched by her, fell in love with her, after two or three meetings adored her utterly, and filled greenrooms with tales of her until Madame Fonpré whose Monsieur directed the theater of Lille, bade him one day produce her that they might all appreciate this authentic siren of a laundry. Le Grand, a trusted friend and occasional lover of the Fonpré's, blew a number of kisses from his finger-tips, struck a hand upon his heart and vanished. He returned with Adrienne whom he introduced in a cultured crescendo.

"Mademoiselle Adrienne Couvreur, jeune fille plus belle (si c'est possible, bien sur, messieurs, mesdames) qu'un ange, et actrice extraordinaire."

He retired with a series of bows, leaving Adrienne in the center of a room substantially filled with members of the profession who stared at her unblinking. She smiled, and the singular charm of that smile, which tacitly denied the comedian's statements and dubbed him a good-hearted idiot, swept every one suddenly within the ranks of her friends. The Fonpré rose and

kissed her and asked that she recite a few lines from anything she knew, or stay, play before the company, supported of course, a scene or so from "The Cid."

Adrienne smiled again. She, with her Thespian babes, had played "The Cid."

She played, and afterwards Madame Fonpré engaged her for the theater of Lille and privily informed Le Grand, that for once, he, the great head of a calf, had known a good thing when he had seen it. Le Grand, when the girl took coach for Lille, wept. Twice her age, he who had had a thousand loves, knew, when Adrienne quitted Paris, that he had had but one. He wept, but he howled terrible blasphemies when he beheld Couvreur, her father, strike her cunningly upon a breast so that she gave a moan as the vehicle rolled away. The unspeakable hatter had found that the Fonpré had sealed her contract with the child with moneys in advance, and he had, in his wine-logged mind, already spent them. Her sister, also traveling, giggled as Adrienne writhed a little between progenitor and cadet.

In Lille she sometimes played Molière after arduous rehearsals that racked her with fatigue, sometimes Racine and the Corneilles, while in her shabby lodgings her father passed from access to access of delirium tremens and her sister lied to him, in his periods of lucidity, concerning the immoral vagaries of the girl, aged fifteen,

who supported them both. Without the city walls the puissant Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, the former in behalf of his coffers, the latter for the sheer love of it, waged war upon France and appeared absolute for the surrender of Lille. While the aging Marshall Boufflers defended the citadel and sought to defend the city Adrienne played wearily, lived wearily, longed for love and happiness and attempted to sublimate her longings in pathetic rhymes. Love, she proclaimed, love would be her egis and her guide. Touching herself and it she was constant of meditation.

"Ah, what a flame thou wilt conceive
And thou wilt suffer for,
For I believe
That as one grows more sentient than of yore
Yet keeps unsmirched, one may not, none, may see
In love, ignoble things or any shame.
Candor and reason, innocence, shall be
Its agents of conception and these same
Its constant guides throughout its ripened years."

Her tremulous poesy bore prophecies. She was indeed to conceive many flames and to suffer for all of them. In Lille, perhaps at the very time this was written, the first was at hand. The Baron of D——, officer in the regiment of Picardy, was young, personable, noble, and

possessed the affection and confidence of Boufflers. Between repulses of Marlborough's determined levies and the veterans of Blenheim and Ramillies commanded by the great Prince Eugene, the young man sought distraction upon the stage whereon Adrienne bewitched the good folk of Lille. Enjoying his prerogative, one that Voltaire was destined to destroy, he sat upon the very boards upon which the actors and actresses played their parts, his sword between his legs, his plumed hat upon his head. He watched a dullish tragedy by Rotrou, slept a little, winced a little as an old wound nipped him and awoke to become tense with delight as a girl, a mere child, suddenly lifted a heavy scene to a superb climax. Later he secured an introduction to her and so passionately did he plead his suit that Adrienne, after a week's defense, thought to behold the felicity of which she had dreamed, and yielded herself to him. For a month she adored him with body, mind, and heart, and then one day, a Bavarian pikeman got home his ugly blade and the Baron of D—— slept in a dank fosse floored with corpses, never to hold his lover in his arms again. Adrienne suffered brutally, incredibly, so that she fell into a decline and wished never again to leave her bed. After a while, dulled with misery, she dragged herself abroad to love in time, though never with the same abandon, another officer, Phillipe Leroy, who used her

for his desires and left her when she was about to bear him a child. Her life, she who was but barely seventeen, seemed to yield nothing but torments and she drifted, physically acquiescent, spiritually and mentally consumed with a sort of abstract agony, from this desertion, into the arms of one Clavel, brother to the Fonpré, a rather especial blackguard who promised her marriage, enjoyed her and went in his turn his way. For a time she hoped against hope, supported her degenerate family and her baby daughter by Leroy, and wrote tragic little letters to her affianced who, in low taverns, laughed at them, spat on them, and quoted them to kindred animals with unspeakable additions:

"I assure you, my dear friend, that I have had no peace of mind since your departure, partly because of the anxiety bred in me by having no word from you, partly because of my frail health. I hope soon to be much better because I shelter the belief that you still love me and that you yourself are well. I beg you to take care of yourself, you can give me no greater pleasure, for your health is as dear to me as mine.

"In the meanwhile I believe you a staunch heart and therefore faithful to your Lecouvreur who loves you more than herself. I embrace you tenderly and with all my heart and I pledge you a fidelity which will bear all testing. . . ."

For Clavel, the very source of laughter . . . !

She waited two years, now in Lille, now in Lunéville, now in Strasbourg, and at last wrote a final message.

"I do not know what I am to think of your negligence in this time when anything alarms me. . . . With all the affection that I bear you, I should be in despair if you did something for me with repugnance. Think well of this, you are still the master. . . . Remember that I have nothing, that I owe much. . . . I have nothing but youth [she was nineteen] and good intentions. . . . Make me no promises that you will not keep even though it be a promise to hate me. . . . It seems to me that that would be sweeter to me than betrayal. I will make my life as I may whether I possess you or lose you. If I have you it would grieve me not to make you as happy as possible; my own happiness perhaps would cause me to forget that grief. If I lose you I will at least try not to do so altogether and I will in some fashion always maintain myself in your esteem. If you are happy I will have the joy of knowing it and of not having prevented it, or, if you are not, I will not be the cause and I will attempt to console myself as best I may."

After betrayal and two years of desertion this was her valedictory. And to such a one as Clavel. Obviously, from the slime, he might only jeer at such a woman

whose heart and mind could fashion no spite or rancor or desire for revenge, and whose body, though soiled by men, was perpetually assoiled by the purity of her spirit. Actually the fellow jeered. Effectually, he never replied.

So she continued playing, created for her genius a popular adulation in the provinces, and repelled squadrons of admirers. She was caught once more, yielded to a young noble of Strasbourg, the Count of Klinglin, who pledged his word of honor to make her his Countess. He begat on her another child, another daughter, and repudiated her timid claims to his protection. Love had caused her to suffer with a vengeance. She would have no more of it. In 1716 she wrote these lines in her day-book:

"I know by experience that one does not die of grief. There are sins of great sweetness to which I may never again yield myself. Experiences too bitterly sad have cleared my reason, I am sick of love and prodigiously tempted to break with it forever, for, to begin with, I wish neither to die nor to run mad. . . . Love is no more than a madness which I loathe and from which I will attempt to free myself for life. I have no more courage for love, I know that it is involuntary, I know its effects, I know that it is wise to quench it in good time and above all to guard oneself against inconstancies when one the least suspects them. My misfortunes and

my experience have given me food for reflection for the rest of my life."

A year later, at the age of twenty-five, she made her début at the Comédie Française, without question the greatest actress in France, always indisputably distinguished, now, wrought thereunto by loves that had torn her, a woman of tragic but genuine genius.

On May 14, 1717, heralded by a tremendous provincial reputation, the girl who in her childhood had played "Polyeucte" beneath the frowning outposts of the Comédie, played the "Electra" of Crébillon to a first night audience that had mobbed the theater, and scored the greatest popular dramatic triumph since the "Britannicus" of Racine. Critics who had seen the "Electra" a dozen times before marveled that, having eschewed the custom of singing the lines, she scored effect after effect by spoken inflection and infinitely surpassed any previous performance. All the great brotherhood were dead, Corneille for generations, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, the brilliant and devoted Boileau, but had they seen Adrienne's "Electra," a play by one in no way to be compared with them, theirs would have been the first voices to applaud. At the same première she proved in the "Georges Dandin" of Molière that tragedy was not alone her vehicle. In the succeeding ten months she played 139 times, completely revolutionizing

time-honored usages in matters not only of dramatic technique but in those of costume and stage effect. So overwhelming was her success that rivals at once laid plans to destroy it. Duclos, Desmares, Champmeslé, women of talent who had long enjoyed moderate reputations, scoured the provinces for debutantes of sixteen who might by reason of greater youth and less sophistication, supplant her in the public eye. They were miserably to fail. Adrienne passed from conquest to conquest, made in less than two years a more than comfortable fortune, lived in a luxury modified by the quiet perfection of her tastes and remained uniformly unhappy. She had no one whom she would permit herself to love. To give herself entirely to her art had made her famous, but to her somber astonishment there remained a part of her which she did not seem able to give. She labored at the cultivation of her voice under the tutelage of an impassioned Platonic named du Marsais; she bought and furnished a charming little house in the street of the Marais, once owned by Racine, and once, later, by the Clairon. A house with an interior like a great complex jewel, odorous, rich, supremely feminine. She bought gems which she wore upon the stage, for she tolerated in her presentations no hint, however small, of counterfeit. For an example, she possessed, among others, "a bracelet composed of ten dia-

monds, eight emeralds and a topaz. Another bracelet composed of seventeen diamonds. A pair of chandeliers composed of five pearls, garnished with twenty-eight brilliants," and so on. She sought all manner of distractions, corresponded with great noblemen and noblewomen who prized her friendship, the Dukes of Richelieu and Rochefoucauld and Gesvres, the Duchesses of Maine and Gesvres, Mesdames de Simiane, de Pomponne, de Montchesna, the Marquis of Rochemaure, the Counts of Caylus and of Belle-Isle, Fontenelle, Piron, Berthier, Amfreville, La Chalotais, and others still, entertained and was entertained and ruled Paris and from Paris the world, and remained unhappy. Her career continued to be a succession of triumphs. Louis, the son of the great Racine to whom the Champmeslé had given exquisite pain by her rendition of his lines, regretted that his father, and Corneille, his father's master, had not visualized in her the very form and content of their heroines. Svelte, pale yet sumptuous, and physically indefinably yet overwhelmingly seductive, she commanded the stage by her very silences, the soft yet admirably audible inflections of her voice and the genius with which she interpreted every semi-tone in the emotional scale. In her time she was as clearly the greatest known actress in the world as today she remains one of the greatest. Yet she persisted in unhappiness. In the world

that now adored her, she could herself find no one to adore.

Then, one day—to be strict, in the first week of November 1718—there went into rehearsal at the Comédie a tragedy entitled "Œdipus," not at all a good play, by a young man whose wit and sallies against the Regent had made him the pride and somewhat nervously beloved darling of Paris. Baptized François Marie Arouet, he had, during a sojourn in the Bastille at the instance of the Duke of Orléans, changed his name, or rather assumed another, that of Voltaire. His tragedy in rehearsal, "Œdipus," proved for him to be a sort of carte du tendre, for it indicated to his mind, already charged with a superabundance of intellectual voltage, and to his heart, which paradoxically enough, was sensitive, generous, and absurdly tender, a route by which both might attain felicity. It had a like effect on the first actress in France, Adrienne Lecouvreur, and in studying it together, the two arrived of course at the same destination.

Voltaire, a familiar in the delightful jewel-box in the street of the Marais, was received by Adrienne in bed for she was often indisposed, and upon the ribbons and laces of the counterpane there always lay a copy of "Œdipus" bound in red morocco tooled in gold. The book was, in some fashion, the emblem of their love

and the very rubescence of its rich binding interpreted their passion. Undoubtedly the two loved without restriction or regret and when the man, harrying and perpetually harried by the Regent's politics, left Paris or came to use it only as a point of vantage from which to discharge the withering fire of his intellectual artillery, the passion passed, the deep friendship and mutual esteem never knew decline.

Voltaire's seems to have been the one love that did not bring in its train the agony of betrayal or desertion. It served the unhappy purpose of convincing her, however, that she might love again without suffering, and in happily pursuing this conviction she suffered more than ever before and in the end, died in the arms of the man who had thus proved, indirectly, her unwitting executioner. D'Argental, her next admirer, was, in some fashion, Voltaire's legacy.

A count, seventeen years of age, devoted to the arts and with one of those temperaments which, like the shallower seas, react to stress in a more considerable disquiet than those of nobler depth, D'Argental, following the stage, of course fell in love with its chief ornament. After the ancient manner, with notes and gifts and declarations so burning that it seemed they must scorch the pages upon which they were written, D'Argental secured an audience, and thereafter, such was the in-

spired ingenuousness of his appeals, invitations to the street of the Marais. The flame of his passion crackling like green wood in her eyes and ears, Adrienne put him off with all the ruses at her command.

"I wish absolutely to dine with you on Sunday or Monday. Farewell, forgive me my humors; I forgive you many other things; I was about to say your love, forgetting that you bear me nothing but friendship, and I wish that you bear me nothing but that."

D'Argental consumed such delicately written repulses as though, in themselves, they added to his flame. He grew pale, moped in politely curious salons and hinted somberly at suicide. Finally he grew so desperate that he committed the unthinkable social enormity of announcing that he wished to espouse Mademoiselle Lecouvreur, the actress. His mother swooned. Rallying to the ministrations of devastated friends she would have sent her son to San Domingo. Death by yellow fever or the knives of insurgent blacks, death in any form, were preferable to such a horror as an alliance with an actress, however great. Of course she accused Adrienne of seducing with unclean wiles the austere purity of her son and when the girl called to justify herself she was denied access. The Lecouvreur went home and penned, in her cursive tracery of a handwriting, this letter:

"Madame: I cannot hear without great sorrow of the anxiety that besets you and of the plans fostered by this anxiety. I might add that it does not abate this sorrow to know that you blame my conduct; but I write less to justify this than to protest to you that the future touching that which concerns you will be as you yourself would desire. I asked on Tuesday permission to see you for the purpose of confiding in you and of asking your wishes. Your reception destroyed my zeal and I found myself to be only timid and sad. Nevertheless it is necessary for you to know my real feelings and if I may be permitted to say more, for you not to disdain to listen to my humble remonstrances, if you do not wish to lose Monsieur your son. He is the most reverent child and the most honest man that I have ever known in my life. One would admire him even did one not possess him. Once again, Madame, deign to join with me in destroying a weakness that irritates you and in which, in spite of what you say, I am not an accomplice. Show him neither distrust nor harshness; I would rather bear the brunt of his hatred, in spite of the tender friendship and the veneration in which I hold him, than to expose him to the slightest temptation to fail you. You are too interested in his cure not to work upon it with attention; but you are too much so to succeed alone, and above all, by fighting his desire by authority and

by painting me in unfavorable colors, even though these were justified. It must be that this passion is extraordinary since it has existed for so long without any encouragement, in spite of difficulties, in spite of the voyages which you have caused him to make, and of eight months' sojourn in Paris without seeing me, at least in my home, and without his knowing whether or no I would receive him into my life. I thought him to be cured and that is what caused me to see him when last I was ill. It is easy to believe that his acquaintance would greatly more please me without this unfortunate passion which astonishes me as much as it flatters me, but which I do not wish to abuse. You fear that by seeing me he neglects his duties; and you so much indulge this fear that against him you make violent resolutions. In truth, Madame, it is not just that he should be unhappy in so many ways. Add nothing to my injustices; seek rather to offset them; direct all his resentment towards me but cause your goodness to make amends.

"I will write to him whatever will please you; I will even, if you judge it expedient, go into the country, but menace him no more with sending him to the ends of the world. He can be useful to his country, he can be the delight of his friends, he will surfeit you with satisfaction and glory; you have but to guide his talents and allow his virtues play. For a time forget that you are

his mother if this quality oppose itself to the benefits that I ask for him upon my knees. In short, Madame, you will first see me retire from the world or love him with a love of passion, rather than that, in the future, he should be on my account tormented."

It is not hard to render here a decision between the lady and actress. One figures to oneself with some amusement the possibility of such a letter as this being written by an actress of today to the mother of some sophomoric lover continually in residence at the stage door. For D'Argental, brilliant and noble as he was, constituted, actually, precisely this analogy. He ceased, after this, to present himself in the capacity of a lover, in the street of the Marais, and as time passed, became a devoted and ever admiring friend. But regardless of the preference a beautiful woman may seek to establish for a man's friendship rather than for his love, it is doubtful whether she may genuinely prefer the former. Perhaps Adrienne, having gained her point, may have experienced a certain, possibly indefinable, regret. In valediction to him as an "amant du cœur" she dispatched one note, the final, wonderfully subtle invitation of a woman whose loves are never light.

"You came to inquire for me without writing me, and you take your departure without seeing me. Dear friend, admit that I am in a fair way to be forgotten,

and that I may not much longer count upon you. I am deeply grieved, I cannot accustom myself never to be seeing you and I miss you now more than ever before. You well avenge yourself for my injustices and I am beginning to believe that yours surpass my own. Farewell, my dear friend; I am greatly touched as I write to you and never have I felt for you more friendship, more tenderness or esteem. Farewell, do not entirely forget me or at least do not allow me to believe that you do. Care well for yourself; I ask it in the name of her who, in all the world, has you most tenderly to heart. . . . Farewell."

Sixty years later, fumbling with age-enfeebled fingers through the drawers of an unconsidered cabinet, D'Argental came upon these missives. Youth had long taken leave of him, youth and desire and the touch of life upon the lyre of the senses, but, as he read, his eyes, grown myopic with senescence, filled with tears. The love of his earliest manhood, palpitant, tender, and gay, might not be touched by those sinister corrosives, death and time.

Adrienne, a general now, of love, though never, like those generals of her epoch, to be bought with gold; Berwick, for an example, and even, in some measure, that ancient gascon-headed veteran, Villars, sought no reprisals nor indemnities. The one definitely supreme,

and, by that same token, utterly destructive, love of her life was at hand.

History has marked Maurice of Saxony as being the last of the great soldiers of monarchic France. Infinitely more capable than any soldier of his time with the single exception of the Great Frederick, he invites comparison in France not with Villars, Berwick, Belle-Isle, roughly his contemporaries, nor yet with such captains of Louis XIV's as Vendôme and Villeroi, but only with Turenne and the Great Condé. Marlborough and Prince Eugene were not overwhelmingly his superiors and indeed it was in the schools of these that he was trained. War and the art of war was his unique and ambitious passion and though distinguished by nature from other men by the magnificence of his beauty and gallant port, and a charm which made of him in the eyes of women nobly or lowly born, the most beloved man in Europe, he was not happy at Court receptions and royal levées, and used the women who adored him merely as diversions between the deliveries of battles. Born the bastard of Frederick Augustus, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, by Aurora of Koenigsmark, he achieved boyhood to surmount the bar sinister and in time was recognized by his philoprogenitive parent who created him Count of Saxony. From his earliest youth Fortune made of him her darling, and he passed from Court to Court

and from campaign to campaign blithely and nobly, in the former a lion passive and a little bored, in the latter a cold and furious energy that seldom encountered anything but victory. With Marlborough he served in the War of the Spanish Succession and with Eugene he fought the Turks, the first of these experiences finding him aged twelve and the second scarce eighteen. Married young to a great heiress, Johanna Victoria of Loeben, he straightway spent his wife's fortune, regularly gambled away his own income, 10,000 crowns a year, pondered sufficiently on life and death to equip himself with a profound and genuine skepticism, and wrote a little to mitigate the enormous tedium that overcame him when his life was not being continually jeopardized by cannon shot or musketry fire. In 1720, while not yet twenty-five, he found himself in Paris, divorced from wife and parted from funds, potentially the best general in Europe, actually a young man without a job and dangerous in his idleness. On August 9th of this year, the Regent, an able man and judge of men, in spite of his astonishing debaucheries and his tolerance for his minister, the foul Cardinal Dubois, invested the young man with the commission of "Maréchal de Camp" and a salary of 10,000 livres, but a title that carried with it no immediate active service, while it served in some fashion to anchor the errant capacities

of the future Marshal Saxe, did not keep him out of mischief. On Christmas night 1721, Conti, Prince of the blood royal, and with the heads of the houses of Condé and Rohan-Soubise, the greatest nobleman in France, paused on the threshold of the Princess, his wife's chamber, and heard upon the far side of the closed door sounds which forced him to believe that, though Bourbon and so vicariously regnant, he was, none the less, a cuckold. When, like a pedigreed bull avenging the honor of his paddocked harem, he burst into the room to surprise and slaughter the adulterers, his lady, ravishingly disarrayed but quite alone, met him with a cold and mocking smile.

"But why the noise? And the pistol, too! Ha! and a sword, and naked into the bargain. But if, my lord, you believe a man to be with me, you took great care not to appear before him."

Maurice of Saxony, making exit by a private stair, must too have smiled. For a "maréchal de camp" he was much abed and on softer and far sweeter clay than that of battlefields.

There were others beside Conti who unwittingly suffered from these dovecote depredations but fortunately, perhaps, for nobleman and simple burgher, Maurice, dallying an evening away at the "Comédie," beheld the Lecouvreur.

The handsomest man of his day, certainly the most renowned for gallantry, he was, by virtue of his philosophy of life, brutally skeptic, and by virtue of his undeniable if latent abilities, more than a mere amateur of women, even as Casanova his contemporary, in spite of his memoirs, was far more than that. Saxe never attempted seductions. Women loved him easily, sincerely and fatally. He had but to be introduced to them, say a graceful thing or two, allow the magnificent leonine impersonality of his gaze to embrace them and go upon his way, and billets followed him, invitations, assignations, adoration. Seldom stirred, he gave in his multiplex unions little else than the physical, but Adrienne spaded deeply in soil that no woman had ever touched before, the rich but acrid substance of his soul. She loved as though by predestination, as if her life until this time had been merely a novitiate for this final ordination into passion. She was thirty, he was six and twenty, both were notable, but from the first hour of their attachment it was she who taught and he who learnt.

Touching this delicate and thorough tutelage, Lemontey writes, "One may say of the victor of Fontenoy and his beautiful mistress that, in exclusion of war, she taught him all those things of which he knew more than any one else, and spelling which he never knew."

In any case, for four years Adrienne and Maurice found in each other a world beyond which neither cared to travel, but the woman's proved, as the years passed, less and less felicitous. Saxe was spoiled and he demanded an exclusive devotion from a woman who daily gave herself to her audiences, a sort of intellectual adultery which, in an actress and an actress of genius, was unavoidable, but none the less reprehensible to her lover. In an hour of depression she wrote the epistle to D'Argental, and severely platonic as this was, Maurice was jealous. She sold her jewels and her equipages to raise for him 40,000 livres to support his pretensions to the Duchy of Courland and he not only suffered her to make the sacrifice but betrayed her gayly with amorous proposals, not only to Anna of Courland, but to Katherine of Russia's cadet, the ruttish Elizabeth. While Adrienne slaved for him in Paris, worried, and pondered on his problems, he became titular Duke of Courland and deserted her for months while Europe applauded his success and the Russian Ambassador wrote that "the females do not sleep for joy."

Her agony at his unbelievable treason unbalanced her mind. The loss of her fortune was nothing to her but it gave point to this last betrayal of her heart. Playing Phedra to a brilliant audience, she heard one night among it the sibilant proclamation of the arrival of some pop-

ular favorite. At the words, "In default of thine arm, lend me thy sword," she beheld Maurice of Saxony among the noblemen upon the stage. Hippolitus in the play faded. She flung the weapon full in her lover's face.

He smiled, that noble, perilous smile, and as she was borne, swooning, away, kissed the warm silken softness of a drooping arm.

She recovered her calm and the extraordinary dignity of her mind to love him more devotedly than ever and he, perversely encouraged in his cruelty by her irrefragable sweetness, advanced a last measure, and one that destroyed her.

Françoise of Guise, daughter of the Prince and Princess of Harcourt, came of the blood of that once most puissant house, the second of whose princes had very nearly ruled France, and the third, in an attempt to do so, had perpetrated the massacre of the Bartholomew. The fourth wife of the Duke of Bouillon, she paraded the least essential hereditary characteristics of the house of Lorraine; very beautiful, tall, slender, with an oval countenance, a perfect mouth and chestnut curling hair. She was vain, gifted, savage, rutilant and quite inordinately depraved. And she loved Saxe, who had made her his paramour. The cultivation of his esoteric feeling for cruelty towards the woman he greatly loved and greatly hated because he had wronged her, demanded

that he oppose with the great lady who was vicious to the core, the great actress to whom vice was as alien as an aureole or the veil of an Ursuline nun. At his estates of Grange and Villecresne, he brought these two together and the descendant of Henry the Slashed, infuriated that Maurice's love for Adrienne might not more skillfully be hidden, asked in her turn that the actress sojourn with her at Pontoise. It was in her mind to play Locusta and having gained the confidence of the Lecouvreur, to impregnate her with such an ardent venom that when her lover beheld her dead, the beautiful body that he had loved would be black and writhen with its violence. She flattered and cajoled and laid her plans and when Adrienne returned to Paris, requested two gentlemen in her suite to procure for her a discreet and dependable agent. They brought before her a young abbé whom she threatened with the Bastille if he betrayed her, and then made privy to her design. With a poignard at his throat he accepted a packet of lozenges and was bidden depart. Trembling, he did so, to perceive that two followed him thereafter wherever he went, menacing as ambulant arsenals. Nevertheless, he secured an audience with Adrienne, praying in an anonymous letter that she meet him in the gardens of the Luxembourg. Under the eyes of the attendant bravi she did so and he confessed all that he had been charged to do.

Calmly she took him in her coach and bade the coachman drive to the residence of Hérault, lieutenant of police. Again the abbé told his tale and the lozenges were flung to a dog which licked one and straightway died in interesting convulsions. Hérault, until this time skeptical, paled. No one in Paris had forgotten the Brinvilliers. He despatched the wretched abbé to the Cardinal Fleury, the first minister of the kingdom.

In a month's time the story was in every salon and tavern in the city. Bouillon was outraged, his duchess terrified, but a fury for vengeance. The abbé, committed by a sealed letter to the Bastille, was perforce liberated by her inability to accuse against him, and then the poor fool lingered in Paris for a month and was never seen by mortal eyes again. Saxe himself was shaken and returned to Adrienne, for a while terrified at what he had done on an impulse of base satisfaction in attempting to cause the women who adored him to suffer jealousy. But Françoise of Guise, how no one knows, had accomplished her iniquity.

On March 16, 1730, playing "Horace" on the stage of the Comédie, Adrienne faltered, clutched suddenly her breasts, and collapsed. Borne to her home she suffered outrageously for four days and on the fourth, with Voltaire's arms about her, and Maurice silent upon his knees, turned from a diligent priest to whisper, point-

ing to her lover's bust crowned always with laurel, "There is my universe, my hope and my gods." It was only when Voltaire felt the cold wearing through his garments that he realized that those words, spoken an hour before, had been her last.

Saint Sulpice, heading the clergy, victims at once of a sort of vile lycanthropy, revenged himself for her valediction by refusing her Christian burial. In the nighttime her body was taken up and disposed of in some dreadful acre where dead dogs, dead paupers and strangled babies commingled their unredeemed, pathetic dust.

This Voltaire was never to forget. The poems he wrote to commemorate her, to avenge, to justify her, the greatest Frenchwoman of her time, persecuted in death and flung into worse than the potter's field by the insensate savagery of a superstition-ridden and corrupt institution, his eternal campaign against the church of the day—"Ecrasez l'infâme," "Crush the monster"—sprang all from this horror. Voltaire, not Maurice of Saxony, grieved for her, wept for her. The future conqueror of Fontenoy, Raucoux, Laffeld, Bergen-op-Zoom and Mæstricht, Prague and Eger, fled Paris to escape publicity, not forgetting to seize the horses he had given to her, and to sell them, ere he went.

She had given him her fortune, her love, and her life.

If it was the Guise who slaughtered her, it was Maurice of Saxony who permitted her to be slaughtered. Though merited glory had come to him, when, at fifty-four he died, worn out by debaucheries, his glory was less than that of her who had been dead for twenty years. And his guilt touching the Lecouvreur can be forgotten no more than can that of Cauchon the prelate who burnt the Maid.

With the Lecouvreur's distinction and significance as an actress or a woman of genius this paper does not concern itself, but only with a gallant being, lovely and brave and debonair, whose life was a succession of triumphs and sorrows met always with the same dignity and resolution. It is true, she possessed all the virtues but virtue. What an admirable epitaph for any human if it might, with truth, be carved about the grave!

THE QUEEN OF CABALS

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That most secular French churchman of the 17th Century, Paul de Gondy, Cardinal de Retz, observed in the cool retrospection of age, that of all the leaders and instigators of intrigues that he remembered, the most formidable, the most assiduous and the most untiring was the beautiful Marie of Rohan, the great Duchess of Chevreuse. Almost from the time of her birth in 1600 to the day when she at last retired, because of the one effective bereavement of her life, from her hazardous pastime of shaking the foundations of a throne, she meddled and schemed and planned, led forlorn hopes and inspired factions, to such an excessive degree that Richelieu attributed to her his cancer and the melan-

cholic humors of the king. Louis XIII, who liked and trusted her father, the Duke Hercules of Montbazon, a potent nobleman, grand huntsman of the kingdom and sometime lieutenant of the king in Normandy as well as governor of Picardy, Paris and the Isle of France, came in time to hate the girl so lustily that the day before he died, he struck her name from the list of those to be recalled from exile, observing with quite healthy peevishness that her return would be the devil, aye, the very devil. The Great Condé, who did not love her, believed that had she been as untiring a general as she was a general nuisance, no soldier in Europe, not even his friend M. de Turenne, might have withstood her.

The Duke Hercules brought her up, along with her senior, the Prince of Guémené, for her Grace of Montbazon had died at her birth. Montbazon, ancient liegeman and trusted friend of Henry IV, was a staunch and honest man, but like the captain of his first master's grandson's musketeers, the Duke Hercules' "mignon péché" was woman. Henry IV, Montbazon and the ever immortal Charles de Batz, the Chevalier d'Artagnan, played alike with women, or at chess when there were none at hand. Montbazon, engaging in the alternative amusement with Marie, his daughter, aged seven, would in his speech so intermingle praises for both that at a very tender age the future Duchess of Chevreuse came to look

upon both as the essential content and material of life. She visualized with precocious clearness the world as a vast board squared black and red upon which knights and pawns would be very numerous, bishops non-existent, castles impregnable, and queens in no way limited as to moves. And the hand that directed the play was, of course, that of a woman. Growing older, she might reflect that it was, after all, one of those bishops, imagined to be non-existent, that held her checkmate for so many years, for Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu, bishop of Luçon, achieved the scarlet to plague her with an ever victorious opposition.

Marie at seventeen was outrageously beautiful and there were ladies of less vernal beauty who pretended that her father should make a nun of her lest Satan, the author of carnal comeliness, return to claim his own. Montbazon, however, was very proud of her and was wont to count her suitors, all sprigs of great houses, as they cluttered up the anterooms of his vast hotel. All the Princesses of his house were fair, he was wont to remark, but cap-dioux! there was an additional something about Marie. The young seigneurs pranced and bounced about her like stallions. . . . There was, however, among them one only that appealed to his daughter. Honoré d'Albert, some time before, had appealed in a like wise to Louis XIII, and to such good purpose that,

though in the beginning he had known only venery and a method of training shrikes, he later became Duke of Luynes, the king's favorite and the most powerful man in France. He was, however, far from being the king's lapdog, as, for instance, the favorites had been of Henri III, the hapless Quélus, Schomberg and Maugiron. Luynes was clever enough to challenge the jealousy of Richelieu, who, indeed, only rose to prominence after he was dead. It was at his devious instigation that Concino Concini and Leonora Galigaï, the favorites of the Queen Dowager, Marie de Médicis, had been slaughtered, and it was by their deaths that he came to rule the kingdom for the king.

D'Albert was a poor name compared to that of Rohan, but Marie and her father foresaw the benefits that were still to come to that of Luynes. On Monday, the 11th of September, 1617, in the apartments of the queen in the Louvre, before the king and a number of great gentlemen, Marie de Rohan became Madame de Luynes. Two years later Luynes was created duke and peer and, later still, constable of France, and marshal of the King's armies.

Louis immediately created of his favorite's wife a superintendent of the household of the Queen, and while Luynes prospered abroad and continued in his ascendancy, Marie came to exercise over the mind and heart of

Anne of Austria that influence possessed by her husband over the king's. Betimes, then, in full possession of her queen, she moved her at will. Anne was just her age, seventeen, and, while beautiful, was not more than barely comparable to herself. Moreover she was not brilliant and the wit of her superintendent filled her with admiration. The somber little Habsburg adored the radiant Duchess and even came to tolerate her husband, the Duke, whom she had at first detested. Marie destroyed, one after another, her most cherished illusions and then gave her new ones. She taught her that decorum was practiced only by grandmothers and hunchbacks and that gallantry and frivolity were the prerogatives of the beautiful and young. Morality, she pointed out, was the crime and punishment of the bourgeoisie, and while Anne trembled with excitement, volunteered to furnish her with lovers. Actually, she did produce the old Duke of Bellegarde, a Lothario so incredibly ancient to a girl of seventeen that no one laughed louder than Louis at his stiff-jointed courtly antics. When, however, Henry, Duke of Montmorency, was sponsored, Louis did not laugh. Montmorency, godson to Henry IV, was the most accomplished cavalier in Europe, only excepting George Villiers, the magnificent Duke of Buckingham. Failing with the first of these, Marie was one day to come desperately near to succeeding with the last, but for the

nonce she was forced to restrict her tuition of Anne to the usage of abstractions. So she gave her a volume of passably scabrous poems, "The Satirical Cabinet, or a perfect collection of the spiced and lusty verses of the day," and Corsini, the Papal nuncio, beholding it between her Majesty's fingers, was like to swoon with horror. From Luçon, the bishop of that diocese noted with disgust that the influence of Madame de Luynes was corrupting the natural good sense of the Queen, and wondered that Louis, a young man sexually timid to the last degree, suffered such a wanton in his household. The truth was that the king was himself corrupted. To Anne's dismay he gazed for periods unseasonably prolonged at her superintendent, held speech with her in alcoves and window bowers, and seemed to illumine his dull, cold eyes from those that flamed at him over the edge of a jeweled fan.

In 1621, Louis and his favorite being before Montauban engaged in besieging the Duke Henry of Rohan who had brought succor to that city, the king, sleeping in hard quarters at the castle of Piquecos, received a visit from his wife and her ladies. When the time came for Anne and her people to return to the softer lodgings of Moissac, her Grace of Luynes demurred.

"But why not stay at Piquecos?"

The Queen dismissed the suggestion.

"For one thing, cousin, there are no beds."

"No beds, Madame?"

Marie's eyes flung their fires briefly upon the King.

Anne closed her fan with a soft snap of feathers, violently, in her little hand.

"In effect, Madame, no beds."

"Ah, your Majesty, but the king, the king has a bed."

"Brouhaha," a French word, describes the sequel.

But as time passed, Louis, at the bottom essentially a serious and meditative man, turned Puritan to the frivolities of the wife of his favorite and, indeed, as Luçon observed with satisfaction, even the latter's influence was become cadent. At the pinnacle of his career, Luynes, prosecuting the war in the king's name against the Huguenots, fell suddenly ill at Longueville's camp and in three days was dead of a virulent fever, while the nobles who had for years licked his boots for his favors ignored the pathetic plea of his open door and quitted him in his last agony so that he sank and died alone. Fontaine-Mareuil, a contemporary, was moved to a philosophic phrase or two, as the dead constable was thrust away into his coffin in the midst of the hurried departure of his false and craven friends. It was true that, as he said, the jackals fled the dying lion, nor returned but to pick his bones. Even the constable's own people played at piquet upon the boards that housed his body

as it lay in the mean and dirty yard of a mean and dirty inn, awaiting passage to Tours.

Louis shed not a single tear. Unlike earlier Bourbons, Condé, who fought with Coligny, or even Henry IV, he was never touched and never faithful to his friends. Returning to Paris he commanded the dead duke's wife to depart from her residence in the Louvre, and made of this action his one singular message of condolence.

Marie, conventionally bereaved, was for a time bewildered, but as to the great game, it might still prosper, for she retained her position by the Queen. Her next move, however, was signally unworthy of so clever a player. Three months after the passing of the favorite, Anne of Austria hoped at last that France was to receive a dauphin. The king and the people rejoiced, masses were celebrated, bonfires built and consumed to the ripple of chimes and the deeper sonance of Cathedral bells. On March 14, 1622, the queen, having supped with the Princess of Conti, was strolling between the ladies of Verneuil and Luynes in the great hall of the Louvre. The latter lady suggested that the queen, supported by her companions, run down the central carpet. She did so, tripped at the foot of the throne and was borne in some pain to bed. Three days later, while bonfires still smoldered and fugitive echoes of melody still lingered

about Gothic towers, the scarce embryonic dauphin lived no more in any subject's hopes.

It was the 25th before Louis, at Orléans, heard the tidings. The first visions of his blood-flushed brain must have been those of the rack and boot and scaffold, but the treason, more soberly considered, was difficult to prove. On the same day after the king had dined, a gentleman, one La Folaine, posted for Paris, bearing a letter to each of the trio of that fatal race. Receiving hers, Marie of Rohan beheld the word "check" in every line: "My Cousin: Having recognized that it is to the advantage of my service that I administer in the future the conduct of the Queen's household in different wise than in the past, I am of the opinion that it may be achieved in no better fashion than by that which will be communicated to you by M. de la Folaine who will transmit to you my desire."

Tersely expressed, this desire spelt "go!"

Anne's note was scarce more tender: "The care that it behooves me to take that there exist good order in your household causes me to create changes in the administration thereof which, in time, you will recognize as salutary. I send La Folaine, who, touching this matter, will transmit to you my desire which I beg you to fulfill at once, rendering me thereby as much satisfaction as, I as-

sure myself, you are disposed to give to one who, concerning you, has promised himself so much."

In vain Anne begged for an explanation, pleaded that without Marie her life was a mere empty eggshell, insisted that the administration of her household was blameless for the misfortune that had overtaken her. Louis preserved his silence and awaited the prosecution of his orders. Finally on April 15, Jeannin, President of the Parliament, notified the Queen that Madame de Luynes would obey his Majesty without further tarrying, so that Marie passed from court, beaten, thought Richelieu, but actually already meditating a counterplay which could not, and would not, fail.

The piece involved in this move that was to save her was in 1622, and after the death of Honoré d'Albert, the most powerful nobleman in the kingdom. Claude of Lorraine, Prince of Joinville and Duke of Chevreuse, was the third son of Henry the Slashed, third and most popular of the Dukes of Guise, who was done to death at Blois by the forty Gascons of Henry III in the previous reign but one. After the defeat and conciliation of the Duke of Mayenne by Henry IV, the house of Lorraine, whose head, after the death of Guise, his brother Mayenne had been, were in high credit again at court, and Claude had greatly distinguished himself during the last reign by successively falling in love with all of the king's

mistresses and fighting far more duels than were necessary. But with the accession of Louis XIII he had become more sober, had supported king and queen dowager in 1617 against the insurgent nobles, and on more than one field had proved himself as fearless a prince of his house as his great father or his greater grandfather. After '17 he was created grand chamberlain of the kingdom, governor and lieutenant-general for the king in lower and higher Auvergne, and received from the royal purse a pension of 40,000 livres a year, with additional grants often amounting to 15,000 livres. At the Louvre, where Marie de Médicis called him nephew, he lodged in chambers above the king's, and Charles of England, Prince of Wales, whose great-grandmother, Mary, Queen of Scots, had been his great-aunt, consorted with him as with a brother. Indeed, in all the courts of Europe, the very high and illustrious lord, Claude of Lorraine, was treated with all the respect due to a prince of the blood royal. In 1622 Louis had great need of him for two reasons, first, because the matter of the marriage of the king's sister, Henrietta Maria, with Charles of England, could not prosper without his influence with the Stuart, and second, Louis, at war with the Huguenots, badly needed the assistance and support of the house of Lorraine.

Such was the very formidable chessman that Marie of

Rohan planned to launch against the king's latest play. Her method of procedure was quite typically her own and characteristically high-handed. Chevreuse, notoriously weak in his relations with women, had, even before the death of Luynes, busied himself unduly, though to do him justice, not without provocation, about the person of the dead duke's lady. After she had become a widow he was unabashed in his attendance and very possibly shared her bed and, at any rate, figured in the gossip of the court as definitely compromised. If at the age of five and forty he still desired to remain a bachelor his conduct was most unwise, for a scant three days after her dismissal from the queen's service, Marie bade him visit her, and, when he came, overwhelmed him with the infallible seduction at her command and asked that he marry her. Chevreuse, knowing well that not even the king trifled with a princess of the Rohan, was well caught. And in addition, while her mind frightened him, her body drugged him like strong wine of Anjou. They were married on April 20th, almost privately, even before the royal sanction, and since in his belated letters of congratulation Louis did not recall Marie to court, they retired to a Chevreuse appanage, the castle of Dampierre.

Louis, in effect, was furious, but Marie could bide her time. She knew well that the king could not spare Chev-

reuse and at court she had the brilliant Bassompierre working in her cause, so that in the end she could not fail to triumph. As she had foreseen, her husband was recalled to the presence on May 20th, was well received and created Grand Falconer of France. In June, against the Huguenots at Négrepelisse, he led, with Bassompierre and Praslin, the "lost children," shock troops of considerable fame, and covered himself with glory. Louis walked arm and arm with him, asked his opinions and advice and made him a councilor of war. For Marie, redemption was not far off. It was not possible to cherish the husband and disgrace the wife. Silently, without congratulatory clamors or applause, Marie in the early summer was once again beside the queen. Louis made no further comment. He merely suppressed the office of superintendent and appointed Madame de Lannoy lady-of-honor. Lest Chevreuse be hurt he created him first gentleman of the bed-chamber while Marie laughed, privily, loud and long. Superintendent or no, once more she directed every impulse of Anne of Austria.

It was at this juncture that the redoubtable bishop made his appearance upon the board. Luçon was now Richelieu, the Cardinal, and first minister of Louis XIII. In the two years following 1623 he was powerful but not powerful enough to harm Marie, though he insisted bitterly and not too subtly that a basilisk was once again

at court, not much disguised in silks and precious stones. The basilisk mocked him openly, and her pupil, the queen, following her idol's example, mocked too. They both of them irked the great man horribly and tormented his digestion. But what could he do? Chevreuse had brought the business of the English marriage to a brilliant and successful close, James I overwhelmed him with cordial correspondence, and Charles wrote him almost weekly in such a tone as this: "You are my very dear friend and daily you give me proof of it. Yield to me all those good offices which the adjacence of our blood demands of you." He added further that from no one but Chevreuse would he receive his bride. "I should be more content to receive from you as her conductor this sweet princess, than from any one else." James, his father, dying, and preventing him from quitting his kingdom, Charles I designated his dear friend and kinsman, the illustrious lord, Claude of Lorraine, as his proxy, and in May 11, 1625, the Guise stood substitute for the Stuart in Notre Dame, and, as King Charles I of England, married the Princess Henrietta Maria of Bourbon, sister to the King of France.

Richelieu, bitter as gall, watched Chevreuse and his duchess wax fat on exceeding prosperity and wondered when the girl would slip. She was destroying his health, he was sure of it. She was so beautiful, so damnably ar-

rogant, and so thrice damnably clever. Chevreuse he had no fear of. He esteemed him as a man of war, but as a statesman to be checked and circumvented, he was a dolt. With cynical amusement the Cardinal observed Marie yield, all sumptuous and soft and passionate, to the amorous besiegings of Henry Rich, Lord Holland, who was with Carlisle, the British ambassador, and grew tense as Paris flocked before the Louvre to welcome the emissary of Charles I who, with Chevreuse, was to bear the king's bride home. He had just the slightest suspicion that with George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, Marie would make her next and most hazardous move.

This Buckingham was, only excepting Montmorency, without a peer in the Christian world as a gallant and splendid cavalier. The favorite successively of James I and Charles I, his rise in the English peerage had been so brilliant and so swift that his enemies could do little else save cling the tighter to the memory that he had been born a commoner. It was said that Fortune had endowed him with everything but the caution bred of intelligence, and to some extent this was true. Tall, broad-shouldered, slim-hipped and muscular, the beauty of his face astonished like a sudden light and the magnificence of his dress and senseless luxury of his habits identified him in type with Riario, that bastard of Sixtus IV who flung pearls to the people of Rome. Foreign

noblemen unacquainted with the character of James I suspected fleetingly a genesis at least half royal and an exodus not, certainly, from common clay, for Villiers in England played more the king than Charles. He came to France cognizant of one fact only that was of interest to him. Anne of Austria held the reputation of being the most beautiful woman of her century, and Buckingham had never known cause to fear the operation of the lex majestatis. To him, in matters of gallantry, a princess, even a queen if young and comely, was only a woman, and a woman . . . well, a woman was a woman, nothing more.

He arrived in Paris on the 24th of May, accompanied by Lord Montgomery, and by preconceived arrangement, took up his residence in the Hôtel Chevreuse in the street of St. Thomas-du-Louvre. There he found Holland and Marie of Rohan already on terms of perfect mutual understanding and did not tarry in making a third to their cabal. On the day following his arrival he presented his credentials to the king and the cardinal and met Anne of Austria. Rochefoucauld, touching this memorable junction of possibly the most glamorous personalities of the time, observed that "the queen appeared to Buckingham even more charming than his imagination had represented and Buckingham seemed to the

queen the one man in the world most worthy to be beloved."

Marie of Rohan, who loved the queen, esteemed the English nobleman, and detested the king and the cardinal, determined her course of action on these premises. By every resource at her command she withdrew from Anne's presence her ladies and the king's gentlemen, and so allowed her to be alone with Villiers, who was not the man to neglect opportunities. De Retz affirms that one evening in the gardens of the Louvre, out of sight of the queen's suite, Buckingham took what he wished by storm and that her ladies rejoined her to find Anne in tears and inveighing against the brutality of all men. He adds further that Marie was asked next day to question the duke as to his certainty of whether the queen would not shortly be in a position to present a false dauphin to France. Obviously a lie much broidered upon by Gondy, himself a man of wonderful debaucheries. Buckingham may have kissed her, but more would have been a physical impossibility and Anne, a Habsburg, would not yield, even to him, like any wench. The Princess of Conti, sister to Chevreuse, and a woman of such free and uncorseted manners that Louis XIII referred to her habitually as "the sin," insisted that, from the queen's cincture to her feet, she, Madame de Conti, would answer for her virtue to the king. . . .

Buckingham was a week in Paris—when not with Marie, who coached him upon his methods of attack, constantly with Anne of Austria. But his week was wasted, Retz to the contrary, for at Amiens, where the royal party broke their journey to Boulogne, his feverish and desperate manner was not that of a man who had achieved his desires. There, once again, Marie and Holland, strolling of an evening with the queen, Buckingham and sundry ladies- and gentlemen-in-waiting, contrived to allow Anne and Villiers to draw away alone. Buckingham staked all on a last and violent attempt and when the company joined them swiftly at the sound of a scream, he was on his knees by the queen who wept without restraint. The duke had failed. The Chevreuse, the queen of England, and the English ministers continued on to the sea but the Queen of Cabals could not bear to admit that she had failed. Buckingham himself, at her counsel, carried dispatches back to Amiens. The king of France, Richelieu and Marie de Médicis received him coldly and with ill-veiled surprise. No, he might not see the queen on matters of state. He, Louis, attended to such business. Desolate, the duke returned to Boulogne. Save to prosecute war against France, he never again crossed eastward over the narrow seas.

Marie had failed and in failing had desperately jeopardized her chances in the great game. Richelieu, mov-

ing the king, now his entirely, destroyed her credit up to the very threshold of Anne's apartments. Who, queried Louis, was responsible for the Queen's tête-à-tête in the gardens of the Louvre? Why, the Duchess of Chevreuse. And who at Amiens when the queen's whole suite was in attendance? Madame de Chevreuse. Who, a thousand thunders, dispatched back to us the feather-headed fool who thought to cuckold France? Again: Marie de Rohan, late the lady of your constable and now wife to your distinguished servant, Messer Claude of Lorraine. The cardinal had his answers pat, and comfits could have been no sweeter to his tongue. Louis, after a bitter hour's consultation with his minister, shrugged his shoulders, ran a ringed thumb down either side of a mustached lip, smoothed a silky royale, and rode abroad to fly his falcons, but he was far from dismissing these things from his mind. Putange, La Porte, Ripert, De Jars and Patel, all individuals attached, during the sojourn at Amiens, to the queen's person, were dismissed from court. Buckingham, it was resolved, might never again play the English minister in France and as for the Chevreuse, well, their time would come.

But in the meantime these last were being welcomed to England as though they, and not the homesick and timid Henrietta Maria, were the much anticipated and joyfully awaited guests. Charles, signally rude to the

bride whom he had never seen or courted, overwhelmed with attentions him who had stood for England the groom by proxy. The Chevreuse were royally installed at Richmond and in London, and between balls and routs and levées, Holland one day and Buckingham the next, made Claude of Lorraine the laughing-stock of the town and his duchess the friend and savior of all those who had staked their reputations on the statement that in France all women were harlots and all men fools. Twice more Marie attempted to get Villiers into France, both times as the escort to Henrietta Maria, who desired above everything else to get home to that kingdom where the sun shone sometimes and courtesy and friendliness were sometimes encountered, but her brother preferred her absence to the presence of Buckingham. Marie bore her husband a daughter in June, 1625, at Hampton Court, and in July, since there remained no real reasons, with the exceptions of Holland and Buckingham, for remaining in England, returned with Chevreuse to France. Charles I bade farewell to them almost with tears and as a parting gift bestowed upon the duke the Order of the Garter. The court of England had seldom been so diverted, certainly not since the old queen's time when a frog-like little man named Anjou had come a-calling.

Louis XIII received them both correctly, but very

coldly. Richelieu, growing daily more powerful, made some obeisance to Marie at their first grande levée since their return and the duchess seemed somehow not to see him. Quite palpably, the court perceived, there was a trial of power toward. It was not long in coming. Marie, after carefully surveying her board, observed two things; one, that the cardinal, supported by the king, was almost omnipotent; two, that the fact that this was so had created and nurtured in France a party resolved upon his downfall. Her Grace of Chevreuse winged her way like a wild goose to the head of this last cabal, and once there, proposed a plan of action that caused even the boldest of its schemers some disquiet. They would, she said, depose Louis and with him the plague in red, elevate in his place his younger brother, the loose-witted, treacherous, apparently soulless Gaston of Anjou, cause Anne to divorce Louis and marry his cadet, and, that done, rule France. Infecting her entire faction with the extraordinary energy of her mind and the formidable inflexibility of her purpose, she opened her play with a successful gambit, the destruction of Richelieu's plan for marrying Anjou to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, a Bourbon legatee of many millions of livres. Easily led, Gaston refused the alliance and, well coached by Marie, remained silent and inactive while she, aided by Ornano, the Prince's governor, and the brothers Vendôme,

bastards of Henry IV by the D'Estrées, fomented in the provinces what promised to be lusty rebellion, and not improbably, revolution. The Vendôme, the Duke César, and Alexandre, Grand Prior of France, demanded that Gaston break openly with his brother and repair either to Metz, Sedan or Havre and there await Spanish levies and the forces raised by the disaffected noblemen. The Duke of Nevers promised, in case of war, to raise troops in Champagne; the Count of Soissons promised 400,000 crowns if Monsieur definitely refused Mademoiselle de Montpensier; Longueville guaranteed 800 Norman cavalry; La Meilleraye, Mauny, Guitry and Bertechères answered for 500 or 600 foot from the same province; all that was awaited was the signal from Gaston and these blades would fall to work.

Why Marie imagined that all this mole work was to continue undetected by so vigilant a sentinel of the kingdom as the cardinal, no one knows. Possibly the truth is that in every contest with Richelieu she underestimated the capabilities of her opponent, so that when, in May 1626, Ornano, governor to Anjou, was arrested at Fontainebleau, she smote her brow, fell all at once so violently a-shuddering that a pouncet-box incrusted with jewels fell from her fingers, and fled to the Hôtel de Chevreuse where, for six days, she remained in strict seclusion. Emerging on the seventh, reassured that Or-

nano had confessed nothing touching the cabal, she devoted barely a month to the seduction and complete subjugation of Henri de Talleyrand, Marquis of Chalais, master of the wardrobe to Louis, and one who at all times was privy to the king's conversation and opinion. Marie was twenty-six and, saving only the queen, the first beauty of Europe. Chalais, who had long admired her, foreswore his allegiance to Richelieu, who had once before pardoned him for conspiring against him, and for a promise which his Circe never kept, plotted to strike down the minister in some stairway turning or cabinet, where the doors were hidden well by arras, and where a hand might stab and be withdrawn before the dead man fell. Poor wittol, scarcely eighteen, Chalais, amiable, good-natured, anxious to be all men's friend, found himself suddenly in an intrigue where no one jested and the escapes of which were so closed against him that he resembled a pet mouse caught in a cage about which great cats lay observing him, agate-eyed and horrible in still ferocity. He was arrested in bed on July 9th. On June 15th at Blois the Princes of Vendôme had in a like wise been seized while making what they supposed was a friendly and well-received visit to their half-brother. A bad place for princes, Blois, and the duke might well remember Henry the Slashed, pierced by forty blades, incrimsoning the carpet at the

foot of the bed of Henry III. Chalais, seized, was the mouse between the paws of the biggest cat, the omniscient Cardinal who had known all from the first and had but waited for the crisis to make his kill. Little more than a boy, the Marquis lost every vestige of his nerve, wrote letters to everyone imploring forgiveness, confessed, accused, said and unsaid all manner of hysterical and pathetic things, and ended by cursing himself for having uttered a single word. Louis, pitiless and cold, signed warrants for his trial on August 5th, and on the 18th he was condemned to death.

In his prison he went mad with terror, refused to be shaved, swore blasphemously against Christ and Christianity, beat his head against the walls and screamed that the world was a latrine and religion a dirty jest. In vain his mother, Jeanne de Monluc, begged his life of the king, and his friends spirited away the headsman of Nantes so that there would be none to swing the ax. Louis remitted a number of unspeakable tortures, that was all. On Wednesday, the 19th, Chalais walked to his death, suddenly as cool and impassive as though he was passing to the feast of a friend. A convict, pressed into service in the place of the kidnaped headsman, did his office in a fashion that merited a thousand deaths. He struck thirty-six times, frantically, madly, while the boy writhed on his knees, gasping "Jésus-Marie," his

head bounding upon the block. At the twentieth blow he died and the executioner, his eyes starting with horror, ashen, insane, short-held the ax and seized the head in his hands, turning it this way and that, unable to sever it from the slumped and pitiful trunk.

So died Chalais, the most pathetic of Marie's many, witch-driven pawns. Ornano died in prison on September 2nd. The cabal dissipated overnight like smoke in wind and Gaston, Duke of Anjou, slobbering with fear, genuflected at his brother's passing, having already on August 6th married the heiress of Montpensier. The Duchess of Chevreuse fled Paris on the very eve of the delivery of an order driving her into exile.

Her own appanage of Dampierre had been the residence designated for her retirement by the king. Eternally fashioning mischief, she gained Lorraine beyond the French frontier, where, without respite or the repose one might believe necessary to one lately beneath a like mental and physical strain, she promptly caused Charles IV, the duke of that domain, to fall madly in love with her and so directed his policies against France and the ministry of Richelieu. Charles, five years her junior, of feeble intellect and small ability, save as a cavalryman, followed her about like a pet sheep, an animal to which he bore no little resemblance, but Montague, English envoy to Lorraine from Charles I, was game far more

worth the hunting. Enamored, and after disgorging his secrets, made happy, Montague revealed that Buckingham planned a descent on France with three squadrons of 10,000 men each, to strike, one at La Rochelle, one in Guienne and one in Normandy. Disembarked, these troops would thus hold the mouths of the Seine, the Loire and the Garonne and menace France from the coast while Lorraine invaded by Provence and Dauphiné. Marie listened with almost incredulous joy. She used her influence over the duke Charles to convince the latter that Montague's project was feasible and sound, and, while the Englishman gained Savoy to win to his cause Henry, Duke of Rohan, kinsman to Marie and leader of the French Huguenots, she recommenced by correspondence the ancient cabal in France against king and cardinal. Montague reported to Buckingham in London, returned to the Continent, purposed to rendezvous in Nancy to await the English squadrons, signals for the delivery of war, and then, as suddenly as a meteor drops in its luminous penciling from the zenith, fell into the hands of the great cardinal. Kidnaped on the soil of Lorraine, he was taken to the Bastille and his papers placed between the hands of Louis, who, with Richelieu bending over his shoulder, absorbed them in their entirety as sand takes water.

"England, Savoy, Lorraine, the Emperor, the heretics

in France, were allied in a pernicious attempt against the state; they planned to attack by sea and by land, by sea in Poitou and in Normandy, by land in Champagne, attacking Verdun with the forces of the Duke of Lorraine and the Emperor, Burgundy with those of the Duke of Savoy; there was potent evidence that Venice was of the faction; that the Dutch had not only also exhibited by their actions their connivance in this business but that they strongly supported it; that the whole had been conceived by the Chevreuse who prosecuted the matter with the consent of the reigning queen."

Richelieu had it in a nutshell. Marie's most pretentious cabal up to this time was the property of the state and her game was checked again. Anne of Austria was terror-stricken, feared, in her own words, for her bread and board, and the allied powers, thus unmasked, repudiated, all save England, their testaments of good faith. And to make defeat the more absolute, the fanatic Felton stabbed Buckingham to death at Portsmouth on August 23rd, 1628.

In the general collapse of her projects Marie still had moves to make, but she forgot them to grieve for the lover whom she had genuinely loved. For a time, indeed, she fell into a melancholy decline, but hers was not the type which die of broken hearts. Richelieu, desiring at all costs to remove her from Lorraine, advised the king to

admit her again into the kingdom and she was in Paris in July, 1631, supporting with Anne of Austria none other than the cardinal against Marie de Médicis, when the queen-mother was finally removed from all power. Indeed for a time she was omnipotent at court and Richelieu, conciliated with an old enemy, had the imprudence to fall as much in love with her as a woman, as it was possible for him to do. For a time, a very short time, things ran smoothly, but for Marie there was, in fair weather, no sport and while conciliations were very well they produced no chess games upon the board of life. As the year wore on she utilized her matchless beauty, now in its acuminal glory, upon the fifty-year-old Keeper of the Seals, Charles de l'Aubespine, Marquis of Chateauneuf, made of him, ordinarily a very able man, an abject slave, and then played him off against her dearest foe, the cardinal, who himself succumbed to a sort of cold and nervous jealousy. Her play in this affair was flawless. When in February 1633 Chateauneuf was arrested at the king's order, his papers, including a number of her letters, demonstrating a finished coquetry and a style of insinuating, seductive, indefinite, kiss-me-if-you-can attack that, it was plain to see, had driven the good man mad. Jealous of Richelieu, he had in the end identified himself with Marie and the queen in one of their eternal intrigues in favor of Gaston, now

Duke of Orléans, and a connection which, in his right mind, he would have avoided like the plague, ruined him and destroyed his credit. He remained jailed until the death of Louis a decade later. Like Chalais and Montague, Chateauneuf, old enough to know much better, was a pawn, and pawns are sometimes ruthlessly sacrificed. No peril, however, threatened the Duchess of Chevreuse, save the now habitual order demanding her retirement from court.

She withdrew to Tours, whence she ceased not to ply Anne of Austria with letters, receiving them in return, and where very shortly she again received my lord Montague, delivered from prison and once again a pawn in play. With him Montague brought the lord Craft, a very young man who went the way of other men, young or old, and fell down worshiping at the Chevreuse' little feet. The three, in an hour or two of the gentlemen's arrival, were once again at the lady's favorite pastime, planning cabals and pondering annoyances for the cardinal. By means of her influence in England, and of relatives in every court of Europe, Marie now resolved to generate opposition everywhere to the policies of Richelieu and commenced forthwith to do so, but her opponent, who slept now practically never, whose health was daily failing and whose digestion was but a battered and useless machine, outwitted

her still. La Porte, the Queen's confidential servant, was apprehended bearing a letter from the duchess to his mistress, and a month later Marie received from Anne a warning that the hunt was up and she had best be riding beyond the French frontier. On the receipt of this advice she experienced one of those periods of panic such as had overtaken her on the day of the arrest of Ornano. Her nerves leaping like swept harp strings, she dressed herself as a man, a cavalier of small family, donned a blond wig, and then, oddly, stained her face gypsy hue. The effect was bizarre but beautiful, almost too beautiful. By saddle horse and by carriage, day and night, she beat southward towards Spain and at Cahuzac in Gascony enlisted the aid of one Jean Paul, called Malbâti, procurator of that town. Marie explained that she was a young nobleman fleeing the kingdom on the outcome of a fatal duel in which she herself had been severely wounded. Malbâti, good Gascon, sympathized, marveling at the extreme comeliness of the boy, and engaged to escort him to Bagnères, beyond the border, and in Spain. More and more intrigued, he questioned craftily, learning that the youth was none other than the Duke of Enghien, son of the Prince of Condé, and then, perceiving blood in the young Prince's saddle, was partially convinced of the truth touching a fatal duel. Finally, on the very mountained line of the frontier, Marie dis-

mounted, lifted hat and wig, shook loose the torrential glory of her hair, and told the enchanted man her true identity. As he stood there trembling, shaken with a pure romantic love for her, she threw her arms about his neck, kissed him once and again, remounted and was gone without him into Spain.

With this flight ended the first period of her career and the days of its bravest luster and most glamorous renown. When, five years later, after illuminating Spain, England and Flanders with the dangerous brilliance of her beauty and her mind, she was permitted to return to France, the great cardinal who had so often outplayed her at her favorite game was dead, and the king too, whose mainstay he had been. Richelieu died in December 1642, Louis five months later, in May 1643. Marie, still very beautiful, was, however, no longer young, and in the pandemonium that the court became with the passing of Louis, the accession to power of Mazarin, Richelieu's legacy, and the regency of her oldest friend, the queen, she may have regretted the brave days of her twenties and of the solid, strenuous combats with the greatest mind of the century. Nevertheless, she might still play at chess, and her opponent, clothed in the familiar scarlet, was, if not so formidable as his master, still the cleverest man alive in Europe. Mazarin, subtle and devious, devoted to France though born and trained

in Italy, a great strategist, timid, grasping, merciful, and on occasion, utterly fearless, ended what Richelieu had begun and handed the kingdom over to Louis XIV, a monument to the ability of his administration. But in 1643 he was unknown, no more redoubtable than Mistigris, Richelieu's kitten, and extremely impressed with the reputation and the record of her Grace of Chevreuse. Rather pathetically, he strove to gain her support with tactless offers of gold and failed absolutely, so that she allied herself with the young and insuppressible coxcomb, Francis, Duke of Beaufort, son of that Duke of Vendôme arrested in the late king's time at Blois. In despair Mazarin turned to Anne of Austria and to his joy found her solidly backing him. In the years that had passed during Marie's exile, Anne had grown away from her, and besides, she cherished a tenderness for the personable and able Italian. Marie was bitterly astonished. Lacking her queen she found her game hard to play, a sort of minor sport, now, with no pieces save a few wrong-headed knights and a handful of pawns no longer quite so single-minded and blind in their devotion to her. Her father, old Hercules of Montbazon, had taken to himself in the twilight of his days another wife, the most famous beauty of her generation, a younger one by a decade than that of his daughter, and though the prodigious ancient begat on her several children, she

supplemented his septuagenarian transports with those of Gaston of Orléans, of her own son-in-law, the aging Chevreuse, and, at this time, of Beaufort. Far from detesting her, Marie made of her a friend, recognizing that, as the mistress of the shallow-pated son of Vendôme, she in some fashion controlled the faction led by him against Mazarin. Aided by the Importants, as Beaufort's cabal was satirically called, she secured the release from prison of her one-time dupe, Chateauneuf, but as this nobleman had, as Keeper of the Seals, before his imprisonment secured the condemnation and execution of Montmorency after the debacle of Castelnaudary, an abortive attempt of Gaston to overthrow his brother, she thereby allied against her the great house of Condé. Duke Henry of Montmorency, besides being the darling, not only of the court but of the people, was the adored brother of the Princess of Condé, and the Condé, headed by Louis, the second prince of his house and with Turenne the greatest general of the French, composed the most powerful family unit in the kingdom. They resented Marie's machinations with a violence that surprised her. At an entertainment which she offered to the queen in the gardens of the Tuileries, Anne, arriving with the princess, sister to the dead Montmorency, requested that Madame de Montbazon withdraw since otherwise Madame de Condé might not stay to

keep her company. The ladies of Chevreuse and Montbazon refused in few but strenuous words. Anne chose to be angered and herself withdrew, followed by many ladies who doubted the prestige of the Rohan as against that of the Condé. For weeks the affair was the scandal of the court and indeed all Paris. Mazarin was, of course, entirely to blame according to the Importants, and Marie, now implacably his enemy, advanced to Beaufort the suggestion that he be assassinated forthwith. She laid the plans to be followed by the bravi designated to dispatch him, arranged that the French Guard commanded by the Duke of Epernon, on duty in the Louvre, make no move if down the long anterooms they heard a scream or two, and on the night of August 30, 1643, prepared to strike. In the late afternoon a familiar of the queen's reported to her the presence, before a tavern near to the palace of the king, of a half dozen bridled horses. Some sixth sense warned Anne that mischief was afoot. She communicated with Mazarin who remained all night snug at home, and on the next day the cardinal had the whole story from one who had overheard the rodomontades of Beaufort. On September 2nd that prince was caught close in the fortress of Vincennes and here was yet another pawn sacrificed, and for Marie only the ancient formula of reproof. Anne herself dispatched the order for her exile.

This for the Chevreuse had never been one of exclusion from the realm. Any one of her many châteaux had always been designated as her residence in retirement, but always she had recognized that she could work for her enemies more discomfort and more agitation abroad. True to her system of play, she left France surreptitiously, gained England, where, owing to the Revolution, she could not stay, and was for a time restrained on the Isle of Wight. Released, she fled to Brussels, where for seven years she remained, the center of a small but fervid faction engaged in correspondence which fostered in Paris the feeling against Mazarin. The troubles of the Fronde were to her the very peak of her desires. Even in 1643, the cardinal, riding abroad, might everywhere hear the troubling ditty:

"He is not dead, he is but changed of age,
The Cardinal, at whom men gird with rage,
But all his household make thereat great cheer;
It pleaseth not full many a Cavalier;
They fain had brought him to the lowest stage.
Beneath his wing came all his lineage,
By the same wit whereof he made usage:
And, by my faith, 'tis still their day, I fear.
He is not dead.

"Hush! we are mum, because we dread the cage;
For he's at Court—this eminent personage,
There to remain of years to come a score.
Ask those Importants, would you fain know more,
And they will say in dolorous language:
He is not dead."

In 1648, infuriated by taxes levied to defray the costs of the Spanish War, Paris and the provinces were open in their bitter opposition to his every policy. Not even the victory of Lens, gained by the great Condé, could pacify them. The Parliament of Paris, supine beneath Richelieu, once again lifted its head. Councilor Broussel, arrested out of hand at the instance of the queen because he inveighed constantly against her minister, was the actual occasion of a determined outbreak in the capital. Fostered by the longheaded Gondy, the future Cardinal de Retz, ever the enemy of the Italian, the tumult reached the proportions of a revolution and while Gondy, coadjutor of the Bishop of Paris, demanded of Anne the freedom of the Councilor, the mob threw up barricades in the streets. In Brussels Marie was radiant. Molé, premier president of the Parliament, followed by cohorts of burghers armed with everything from kitchen knives to ancient battle axes, interviewed the queen in his turn and the Parisians burned Mazarin

in effigy as he did so and shouted in the horrid monotone of the crowd for blood or Broussel, Broussel or blood! Blood! Marie was bursting with joy. Broussel was liberated, but the Fronde, thus conceived, was born and would not die. In the night between the 5th and 6th of January 1649, Anne, the infant Louis XIV and court fled Paris for St. Germain, while even the coachmen who drove them hummed gayly:

"A Fronde-ly wind
Blew up today,
'Gainst Mazarin
It howls, they say."

In Brussels Marie could hardly contain herself. The Great Condé, loathing Mazarin, had nevertheless refused to join de Retz, since, he said, "My name is Louis de Bourbon and I do not wish to shake the throne. . . ." At the head of the boy king's troops he defeated the Frondeurs at Charenton, but the former were relying on the invincible Turenne, whose assistance the disaffected Duke of Bouillon, his brother, had guaranteed. Suddenly, the whole thing collapsed, the storm died. Turenne's army refused to follow him into France, Paris surrendered for a price and Condé, taking the lion's share of the spoils, secured, as an additional check on Mazarin, the recall of Madame, the Duchess of Chev-

reuse. It was a shrewd stroke and Marie, palpitant and gay though almost fifty, did not tarry on the road from Brussels, but Mazarin, veteran fencer, was to riposte all in a moment and score his touch. Condé and his brothers Conti and Longueville were arrested and held at Vincennes. When the smoke of the national explosion caused by this move had cleared away, Condé was planning to ally himself with Spain against his country, paralleling the case of his great ancestor, the Constable of Bourbon, and chaos, dominated by one mind only, that of the Italian, reigned in Paris and the dominions.

Marie's last cabal but one, and, in actuality, her only effective intrigue, was the instrument that thus turned against France the sword of Rocroi and Lens. Though Condé suffered her return, believing her the enemy of Mazarin, she, perceiving that the prince's arrogance was offensive not only to herself but to Anne and the cardinal, formed her cabal of just those two. Queen, bishop, and no pawns, herself to direct the pieces, and success was inevitable. The three princes were arrested, and though France suffered much, Mazarin a little, and Anne less, in the sequel, she herself was not even exiled. For a time the cardinal had no praises too high for her and Anne resumed all her ancient affection, but when one game was played, for Marie there was as usual no spice in life until the next was opened. Scarce two years

later and the incredible woman was allied with none other than the Great Condé himself, the very man whom she had imprisoned, against Mazarin and the queen, the price being a Condé alliance for her very beautiful daughter, Charlotte Marie of Lorraine. Conti was the prospective bridegroom and for a time things ran smoothly, but enemies spread the tale that De Retz had already deflowered the girl and the queen forbade the marriage for the obvious reason that she mortally dreaded an alliance of two such potent malcontent houses. The Condé broke the troth and five days later Marie wrote to Mazarin that she was thenceforward devoted to his service as against that of the princes.

It was her last cabal and like all but one of them, it had proved abortive. She might, however, have continued indefinitely in her schemings had not her daughter died in her arms after an illness of only a few hours, on November 7, 1652. Her death literally crushed Marie, robbing her, as it did, of a friend, counselor and protectress, who almost alone of all her manifold lovers or relatives had never betrayed her. She who had hitherto been so unbelievably courageous, energetic and untiring in all her hours of defeat, felt suddenly no more desire even to go abroad from her home, renounced the court, forgot the plans that she had made. The vision of life as a cosmic chessboard faded from her mind for

ever. The queen, the cardinal, princes and statesmen, dwindled in her consciousness and disappeared. Her child buried, she quitted Paris for the first time in her life, save once, of her own accord, and gained Dampierre. The great game was over.

In the time of Charles II, of England, it diverted certain of his partisans to observe that the first letters in the name of the lords Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington and Lauderdale, formed the word cabal or group of conspirators, such as, of course, was constituted by these noblemen. It is doubtful, however, if in a less insular sense, any monarch or minister of seventeenth-century Europe would have hesitated to substitute for that first C, Chevreuse. Compared to her, indeed, all, save the notable Ashley, anagrammed in the acrostic, were clumsy and inept children. It was the misfortune of Marie of Rohan to be opposed in her youth by one of the greatest men in history and in her later years by a statesman who ranks only just below the ablest. Barring only Richelieu, whose end she hastened, and Mazarin, whose fall she well nigh encompassed, she was the most effective politician of the time, and had hers been the position of the Chateauroux, the Pompadour or the Du Barry a hundred or so years later, it seems safe to say that France would have lost neither Canada nor India nor ripened so swiftly, medlar-wise, into the corruption

that sped the Revolution. It is interesting to remark that her cabals, all save the last when she sought to benefit her daughter, were aimed to accomplish only the good fortune and prosperity of her friends, and never the aggrandizement of herself. In the beginning she loved Anne of Austria and hated Louis XIII, and his minister for causing her unhappiness. She loved Buckingham and intrigued to secure him his desire. The conspiracies that involved Chalais and Chateauneuf were directed once again for the happiness of the queen, held almost in duress beneath the dominion of Louis. The plottings with Montague and Lorraine had marked a like endeavor, and that with Beaufort and later with Mazarin himself were formed because first the cardinal and then Condé had seemed to threaten the credit of her house. She herself but seldom feared anything. Twice only, on the arrest of Ornano and on the receipt of the queen's warning after the second cabal with Montague, did she lose her head. She seemed to bear a charmed life in a day when a Richelieu could slaughter a Montmorency and a Cinq-Mars and when no blood in France, however ancient or semi-royal, might with impunity defy the valetudinarian who had once been no more than Bishop of Luçon.

Chevreuse, her husband, is a character not without pathos. Brilliant, popular and dissipated in his twenties,

his thirties found him a loyal and distinguished servant to the king and the queen-mother, and his forties without a rival as the most powerful nobleman in France. After the English marriage, however, his laurels, chilled by the constant disgrace in which his wife found herself, withered swiftly and he did nothing to add to them. A brave soldier, a charming man, he was, beneath it all, a little timid, excessively lazy, easily dominated. Marie of Rohan, having married him virtually by force, always frightened him a little, cast his talents into a very heavy shade, and paid him neither the courtesy of discreet betrayals nor the respect due to a cuckold who wears his horns with philosophy. After her first exile he saw her practically never, deplored her contumacious busyings to one king and two cardinals, and only in 1649 consented to intercede for her with Anne of Austria. He was seventy-two and stone deaf, but nevertheless none had fought more gallantly than he against Condé at Charenton, and when he presented himself to the queen she screamed reproaches at him for betraying his sovereign. The old gallant, one hand at his best ear, listened with attention, then, bowing after the fashion of Henry IV, of glorious memory, whose rival and follower he had been in his lusty youth, he bowed. "I am your Majesty's very humble servant, but I can never abandon my good friend Paris and I shall, God granting

me health, always be upon his side, and if your Majesty wish me upon yours you must never leave him." Anne had at this time fled to St. Germain. Chevreuse was, at bottom, one of those lads that can never grow old. When he was fifty-four he had fought a duel "à outrance" with Montmorency, who had lampooned his incessant amours, the which were, until his death, marked, there is no denying, by a singular catholicity of taste. Few men of any age in France cared to cross blades with the sweet Duke Henry, but Chevreuse not only did so but nearly killed his man. Only Marie's influence with Richelieu, at that time fancying himself in love with her, saved him from imprisonment. He lived until he was eighty, seldom stirring from the Hôtel Chevreuse save to fight for the Fronde, eating, drinking, caressing pretty girls of any degree, all of whom played Abishag to his David and warmed him famously as no doubt he warmed them. As he grew very old his brilliant, tempestuous, trouble-making wife became to him no more than a memory. When he died he remembered her not at all, and as the sand ran out, saw only the gallant cruel face of his father, Henry the Slashed, and the lovely, childish one of his first love, the Countess of Moret, whom he had shared with the great King Henry.

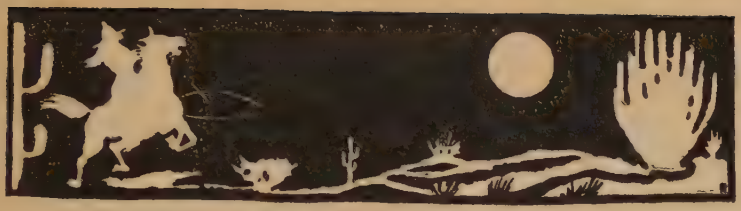
Marie, his duchess, once the Queen of Cabals, lived on at Dampierre for another twenty-two years. It was not

until August 12th, 1679, that she forsook this world, having outlived by many years friends and enemies alike, queen and cardinal, and noblemen of all degrees who had loved or hated her. It cannot be possible that she wished to live longer, for the France of the Sun-king was not the France that she had known. In her later years she who had been, with her oldest friend and only regretted enemy, Queen Anne, the loveliest woman of her day, and who had, between intrigues, much frequented a furniture far more universal in its use than a Prie-dieu, became violently addicted to the latter and so passed in the odor of some sanctity, though her last lover, Geoffrey de Laigue, Baron of Plessis-Patay and lord of Bondouffle, lived with her for five and twenty years. Fourteen years her junior he died at the age of sixty at Dampierre, and though at first he had become her lover merely to enlist her upon the side of De Retz in the Fronde, he ended by loving her deeply though her famous beauty had sadly faded.

"Ci-gist Marie de Rohan, duchesse de Chevreuse, fille de Hércule de Rohan, duc de Montbazon. L'humilité ayant fait mourir depuis longtemps dans son cœur toute la grandeur du siècle, elle défendit que l'on fit revivre à sa mort la moindre marque de cette grandeur qu'elle voulut achever d'ensevelir sous la simplicité de cette tombe."

The illustrious and glorious titles of Claude of Lorraine, Prince of Joinville and Duke of Chevreuse, and lord of many holds and keeps and castles with names each one a separate lyric, find no place herein, and where are those of the Rohan and of the reverted distinctions of Honoré d'Albert, Duke of Luynes and Constable of France? Towards the end Marie had forsaken all the pieces on the board of life save bishops, a paradox which might have caused her to paraphrase in epitaph the translation of Swift's tragic apostrophe, "It's all folly, they'd better leave it alone."

CALAMITY JANE



CALAMITY JANE

ON AUGUST 5TH, 1903, THE DEADWOOD PIONEER TIMES published the following brief notice:

"The Remains of Mary E. Burke, the Calamity Jane of border history, were laid at rest yesterday afternoon. The funeral services were held in the First Methodist Church and the church was packed with old settlers and friends of Calamity. The funeral sermon was delivered by Dr. C. B. Clark, and Mrs. M. M. Wheeler and Miss Elsie Cornwall, with Miss Helen Fowler at the organ, furnished the music."

The end of Calamity Jane.

She had ridden into Terry in the Black Hills in the last days of July and had checked her decrepit pony at the door of the Calloway Hotel. Within, the barkeep had marked the soggy figure in the saddle, and, idly mopping his oak, had observed tolerantly to his employer, "Ain't nothin' wild about that pair of deuces. Right from here I ain't able to remark which on them has four laigs and which two." In the exhaled stench

of his cigar's smoke the hotel keeper had started to smile but he had checked himself, flipping the chewed butt from him. "Son, you'd short change your ma. Yonder's Calamity." He had been forced to help her from her saddle and had, without question, supposed her very drunk. To his astonishment she was sober but hardly able to walk. "I'm ailin', I'm mighty sick and I'm fixin' to cash in," she had insisted to the large company of friends who had come swiftly to the hotel at the news of her arrival. They had perished the thought in vain. Jane was stubborn. Pneumonia set in on the last day of July and by August 2nd she was dead. Twenty-seven years before, on the same day in the same month, almost at the self-same hour, a sewer-rat with a bad squint and a heart squeezed to a yellow rag by terror, had shot to death from behind that friend of happier days, Mr. Hickok the marshal, and it was to a grave adjoining that of the illustrious Wild Bill that Calamity at her own request was borne. By a few, she was sincerely mourned.

A younger generation than hers achieved maturity in the West to look upon her as little else than a very bad and perennially drunken old woman whose conduct was a thing of shame and whose continued leave of absence from jail was a menace to public morals. Still a younger one arose to treat her with compassion and a great deal of uneasy admiration as almost the last

symbol of the raw and fighting West. Her own accepted her for what she was, a frontiersman with the vices and virtues of the type, slightly handicapped by being miscast in sex. Her life was full of incident, full of a wild sort of happiness, equally full of sorrow that she could not explain, and it ended in good time. After 1903 the West could have had no place for her. Her sort were all gone, most of them to Boot Hill, these many years, and none like them was being born any more. Cody and Masterson and a few more were different. They had made concessions to life and the changing times but Calamity could never seem to do so. When the price of whiskey had gone up in Spearfish she had earnestly attempted to kill the barkeep and, balked, had afterwards mingled her imprecations with his, against the banditry of big business. Age likewise could make no treaties with her. To the end she abused her granitic constitution as though the morrow were always bringing her her twenty-fifth birthday, and Mr. Lewis R. Freeman, who saw her in Livingston, Wyoming, in 1902, found in her no yielding to that moderation induced by the middle years. After midnight riding home to his hotel, the Albermarle, he was halted by the spectacle of a burly cow hand, in chaps and spurs, who clung to a bending lamppost as though to hold its point firm in the center of the wheeling heavens.

"Short Pants! Oh, Short Pants—can't you tell a lady where she lives?"

Mr. Freeman, astonished, paused. Interested in the singular delusion of the man, he came nearer.

"Show me where the lady is and I'll try."

He who clung to the lamppost emitted a loud cry.

"She's me, Short Pants—Martha Canary—Martha Burke, better known as Calamity Jane."

Mr. Freeman relates that she had ridden in from Bozeman in the afternoon and having secured lodgings over a saloon, had forgotten its address as the evening wore on and so was in need of a pilot with an intelligence less blurred with joy than hers. Mr. Freeman convoyed her from saloon to saloon but gained but little information since at every one the men there assembled would give tongue at the sight of Calamity, crying out that she was their mother and their best pal and that on no account would they part with her. Finally, however, she was safely housed after having disposed of an amount of valley tan which would have been markable in a very young man only a little under seven feet, and at this time she was one and fifty years of age. Mr. Freeman had sought her out next day, since in his early youth he had been thrilled by a bootlegged yellowback entitled "The Beautiful White Devil of the Yellowstone," which had owned Calamity as its inspiration. He

found her cooking breakfast, all unmindful of the previous evening's amenities, and quite willing to tell him her history. "Sure, Pants, just run down and rush a can of suds and I'll rattle off the whole layout for you. I'll meet you down there in the sunshine by those empty beer barrels." And she did, the layout consisting of her dime museum lecture, prepared one year when itinerant showmen had sought to capitalize her past.

She was born, it seems reasonable to believe, in Princeton, Missouri, on May 1st, 1852, though old-timers who knew her have given her birthplace and birth year variously as Burlington, Iowa, 1851, Princeton, 1848, Fort Laramie, 1860 and so on, each, as a rule, selecting a different place and time. Since she insisted in 1903 that she was two and fifty years old and that Princeton was her native town, there is no reason to dispute her facts though her memory, save for the faces of old friends, was ever bad. In 1865, aged twelve, she accompanied her family to Virginia City in Montana, a journey which occupied five months and which served Martha Jane Canary as the only tutelage for life that she seems ever to have received. When Virginia City was reached the child lived in the saddle and handled pistol and rifle as one does table service, and her invective was justly feared for many miles around. Her mother died in Blackfoot, Montana, in 1866, her father in Salt

Lake City in '67, so that when in 1868 she found her way to Fort Bridger in Wyoming she was entirely on her own in the world, a sixteen-year-old girl solidly but gracefully built, and with the comeliness of perfect health making more friends for her than she had need for. She has had chroniclers who record that from Utah, where her mother, who had died, was married to one Hart, she fled to Rawlins, Wyoming, and thence to Fort Steele where she entered a brothel for no apparent reason save that of cussedness, and between times became a trained and experienced teamster. She herself never made mention of this though to have been ashamed of such a course would never have occurred to her, but it is certain that before she was twenty she had enjoyed a number of paramours and had qualified as a mule-skinner of ability. She was not, as she claimed to have been, a scout with Custer and the 7th Cavalry though Captain John G. Bourke of the 3rd Cavalry speaks of her as having joined the teamsters attached to Crook's campaign in Arizona in 1876. By this time she shared with Wild Bill Hickok the limelight of the West, though this did not save her from dismissal when she was found swimming quite innocent of bathing gear with her companion teamsters. The officer who reported her discovered what smote him into loud astonishment, for he averred that until then he had thought her the

toughest mule-skinner in Arizona. She herself explained her departure from Crook's expedition on the grounds of a severe illness contracted when swimming the Platte at Fort Fetterman, clothed, and bearing dispatches, the sequel being an ambulance especially commanded by the General, and a luxurious convalescence at Fetterman. But she erred. It may be that she scouted for Miles, Terry, or Crook in the campaign of '72, but the fact is not to be found in trustworthy sources and it is certain that in '76 she drove teams and was expelled from that occupation by the exigencies of the moral code of the United States army.

It was at Laramie in that same year that she encountered James Butler Hickok, well and favorably known throughout the United States as the greatest peace officer ever active in the West and probably the fastest and most accurate pistol shot of all time. Calamity in later years was fond of linking her name with his and it has been said, in gross error, that she and Mr. Hickok were man and wife in the sight of God and even, perhaps, in that of the state of Wyoming. Nothing is farther from the truth. Wild Bill was one of those men who, born and reared without advantages, achieve manhood to be, inexplicably if one will, more a gentleman than two-thirds of those who abet their birth with heraldic conceits preserved in seal-rings and in a

number of lineal fables. He liked Jane much as the king likes his jester, tolerantly submitted to her familiarities, and occasionally paid for her drinks, but not for an instant did he consider her in another light than that of an asexual buffoon capable of loyalty and therefore to be protected. Mr. Hickok's taste in women was, like his taste in pistols, fastidious and incapable of latitude. Calamity deposed that in his company she rode to Deadwood in the Black Hills in the late spring of 1876 and that it was she who captured Jack McCall after the shooting in the Sixty-six saloon. "I at once started to look for the assassin, and found him in Surdy's butcher shop. I grabbed a meat cleaver and made him throw up his hands." Again she erred though there is no doubt that had she had the opportunity, she would have not only taken the paranoiac single-handed but probably shot him to pieces. Her courage was never disputed. Several times pursued by Indians, she fought one small band to a standstill from a buffalo wallow and escaped from another by riding her mare down a cliff so steep as to impress the Indians as being quite impossible of ascent or descent. Her name itself, "Calamity," dated, it was said, from the time in the early 'seventies when she saved the life of Captain Egan, shot and in the process of being scalped by Wyoming Comanches. She eliminated his enemies with some very

fine gunplay executed at a full gallop, picked up the soldier, and brought him safe in to Goose Creek. Whereupon Captain Egan observed that in times of calamity, it was well to be attended by heroines like Jane. In Deadwood all men, even the worst, liked her, drank with her and swore at her, but no one of them ever forgot that she was only a few seconds slower going into action with a Colt's powder and ball pistol than the fastest, and therefore not to be unduly offended. Drunk or sober, she was a dominating personality save to the maned and leonine Mr. Hickok. On the occasion of the Reverend Hiram Weston Smith's advent into Deadwood on August 21st, 1876, Calamity, issuing from the Sixty-six, hilarious and shod with flame, observed the crowd and the earnest and perspiring man of God. Diverted, she drew nearer. At a pause in the sermon she burst suddenly past Black Jack McAller the gambler, who stood nearest to the Reverend Smith, and faced the crowd:

"You sinners, dig down in your pokes now; this yere old gent looks broke and I aim to collect two hundred dollars for him. Limber up!"

She took in 235 dollars in dust in six minutes and returned to the soap box to find the Reverend Smith "roarin,'" so she claimed, "all hell loose." He neither took the gold nor thanked its collector, a piece of non-

sense that she found tiresome if not actually discourteous. For a minute she suffered the exhortation to proceed and then howled suddenly in a voice noted for its diapason, "You damned old fool, take the money first and then turn loose this yere speech." The divine, killed and scalped the next day by Sioux just out of Deadwood, was the first apostle to this part of the Black Hills. A courageous and devoted minister, he was, as all could see, as stubborn as a Laramie mule, for when he left he refused the loan of Black Jack's six-shooter. Possibly only Jane could have succeeded in making him take it, for to all the gambler said, the minister replied, "God will protect me, in Him I trust." Black Jack was finally discouraged, since "God's all right but take my advice" had seemed to the Reverend Smith to savor of sacrilege.

Deadwood in 1876 was, it is possible, not as tough as had been Dodge City five years before, or Hayes, or Abilene, but that it was sufficiently tough to harbor the murderer of Wild Bill is a guaranty of the unpolished quality of its inhabitants. Hickok, who had quelled Abilene, terrorized Hayes City, and reduced Dodge to a sort of Spotless Town whenever he rode in, finished at Deadwood, lulled for a few hours only into carelessness and a false security which betrayed him. Accustomed when playing poker always to sit with his

back against a wall, the comparatively mild reputation of the town led him for the first time in his career to leave a door at his back, and as a consequence he met an untimely end. But Deadwood no more than any other shanty nest in the West possessed terrors for Calamity, and it is not unremarkable that, if for this reason alone, she was not at one time or another shot into pieces by such characters as Kelly the Rake, Red Johnson, or Fancy Pat of Dodge City fame. The killers of this type prevalent in the West shot as casually as less fatal rascals spit, and towards women their conduct was if anything more brutal than towards men, for the dance-hall girl carried no weapons of offense. Such a one as Ed Hurley, for example, would find a very drunken cowhand howling like a wolf in the middle of Dodge's main thoroughfare, ask him what he did, and receiving the provocative but innocuous reply that the howler was indeed a wolf, and that it was his right to howl and he'd like to see any blankety blank coyote stop him, shoot the fellow dead and then almost kick his head off. The average gambler or roustabout of Dodge City, Hayes City, Abilene or Deadwood was an unconscionable animal when drunk and quarrelsome even when sober. Various means to destroy him were adopted at various times, such as the horrible slaughter at Dodge perpetrated by Fancy Pat and sundry other saloon

keepers and merchants, in which fourteen men were shot to death in cold blood and their corpses left to lie all night in the streets. A dance hall girl attempting to succor one who may still have been breathing, was beaten over the head with a pistol barrel, and herself left for dead. Next day the self-styled regulators piled the dead into boxes, two to a box, shoveled them into a pit in Boot Hill and held an all-day celebration around the common grave, finally throwing in a flask of whiskey each to the departed. In this case, of course, the killers were as bad, if not worse, than the killed, so that no real good was done, but marshals like Hickok and Bat Masterson effected wonders and seldom killed the wrong man. Calamity, though she was frequently drunk and as often quarrelsome, was never at any time grouped under the heading of tough character. Town marshals, barkeeps, cowhands and badmen all acknowledged that underneath it all she was a good friend, a real sport and a square shooter, and she was only locked up when the exasperation produced in her by a refusal of credit at the local bar threatened to make of the place just a pile of dust and splinters.

For any one man in the West who branded her as a procuress, a thief and a drunken harlot, twenty could be found who would share their last dollar with her and stake her to everything that they had. Deadwood and

the gold camps of the Black Hills owed to her ministrations scores of lives that, but for her financial assistance and her nursing, would have gone out in the smallpox epidemics of '78 and '79. When the dance-hall girls and all other forms of unattached women had fled the country like rats, Calamity appeared, buckskin suit, pistols and all, and nursed for days and nights at a time without rest or the least complaint. Working one time in Pierre as a biscuit-shooter, she heard of a family destitute and dying of black diphtheria, and at once, though she did not know them, she sent to them all her savings, some twenty dollars in gold. In '78 she nursed, until the girl died, the sister of the Mount Moriah sexton in Deadwood, and at various times staked total strangers with the last of her resources. A famous instance of her sense of philanthropy occurred when in Deadwood she had fallen temporarily on evil ways and had returned briefly to a life of prostitution. A miner, sobering slowly, realized that on the preceding evening his pocket had been picked of thirty dollars as he lay unconscious in the dive that had served as his lodgings for the night. Reporting the theft to the town marshal, that officer had gone thither and arrested Calamity, since she had been the miner's fancy. Asked by the judge if she had committed the theft, she was frank as the day:

"Why, hell, yes, Judge!"

The court affected surprise.

"Why did you steal this money and what did you do with it?"

"Well, Judge, I figured that if I didn't lift his poke the other girls would and anyway I had a use for it. I gave it to a girl who is mighty sick at the hospital an' hain't neither friends or money."

The fact being verified, Jane was at once released, and the plaintiff, charmingly enough, was fined and reprimanded.

In her youth Calamity was far from being the hard-faced, forbidding old girl that hailed Mr. Freeman in Livingston in 1902. Of medium height, she was strongly and even beautifully made, and her dark brown hair and eyes and her red-brown color caused many men to fall in love with her. It has been said that she was twelve times married, each husband in turn finding that of very truth he had married calamity, for each, with the exception of the last, died swiftly with his boots on during or just after his honeymoon. Burke, her last consort, with whom she reappeared in Deadwood from Montana in 1895, was of a different type and seems to have left her in time, for no gunman notched his passing on the butt of his 45. By one of these men Calamity had a daughter whom she sent East and caused to be educated at a Sisters' Convent and

whom she forbore to see lest the child's life be injured by her mother's notoriety and the singular irregularities of her life. Husbands meant little or nothing to her but she seems to have loved children and to have feared them, succumbing to shyness in their presence, yet bidding strenuously for their affection. Men, save as people to drink with, fight with, and laugh with, occupied her little. She may have loved the superb Mr. Hickok, but to the rest she remained largely indifferent, esteeming them at times as stud animals, but devoting herself for long to none. Children were different. Hazily conscious of her own position as an outcast from her sex and the greater part of society, she occasionally longed to establish herself in the eyes of human beings as yet undesirous of enlisting themselves among the estimably pharisaical.

After the Indian wars Calamity put her hand to a number of things; drove a mail coach between Deadwood and Custer City, fought Indians, punched a few cows and engaged in every bad-man hunt that took place in the Black Hills. She was seldom in one place long and came and went between Wyoming, Montana and Dakota, doing odd jobs of teaming or stock handling and carrying on the best traditions of the frontier when pay day came round and the boys were in for the drinks. In 1895 Kohl and Middleton, the dime

museum impresarios, engaged her services, and on January 10, 1896, she made her professional début at the Palace Museum in Minneapolis, delivering a short and very fluent autobiographical sketch, so glamorous, imaginative, and utterly untruthful as to be quite useless as a source of reference. In this her military history is recorded at some length and her affiliation with the famous 7th Cavalry of Custer is firmly stressed. All, alas, stuff and nonsense, but in 1896 poor Jane had reached the point when she had to capitalize something. After going at a gallop through her career up to that time, she ended her reminiscences with an answer to certain ribald souls who wished to know why any one should pay a clipped penny, far less a dime, to behold her.

"Among the many whom I met were several gentlemen from Eastern cities, who advised me to allow myself to be placed before the public in such a manner as to give the people of the Eastern cities an opportunity of seeing the woman scout who was made famous by her daring career in the West and the Black Hills. . . ." Poor Calamity! Her career was indisputably daring but it was not as a scout that she gained her reputation.

At the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1900 an alleged charitable organization sent to Deadwood for Jane to come on, at their expense, and give the East an

opportunity to view her. She went and the charitable organization did good business with her but she saw but little of the profits and Buffalo affected her unpleasantly. Fortunately her old friend Colonel Cody visited the Exposition grounds one day and she saw him. Greeting him with a long loud cry she indicated the surrounding country with a gesture far from satisfied.

"Why, hell, Bill, look at this layout! It's got me thrown and tied. I want to go back. There's no place here for me. Stake me to a railroad ticket and the price of the meals and send me home."

Buffalo Bill, himself perhaps a little wistful, staked her.

She was back in Deadwood in 1901 riding the country again, living on the bounty of old friends and picking up a few dollars here and there by the sale of photographs and postcards. Her string, as she recognized, was very nearly played out. When she climbed off her pony in 1903 before the Calloway Hotel in Terry, she had herself decided to cash in.

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